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THE THREE
ARCHBISHOPS:

LANFRANC—ANSELM—A'BECKET.

BY

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PREFACE.

IN one of those eloquent passages which mark the Introduction to his History of England, Lord Macaulay observes:—"The sources of the noblest rivers which spread fertility over continents, and bear richly-laden fleets to the sea, are to be sought in wild and barren mountain tracts, incorrectly laid down in maps, and rarely explored by travellers. To such a tract the history of our country during the thirteenth century may not unaptly be compared. Sterile and obscure as is that portion of our annals, it is there that we must seek for the origin of our freedom, our prosperity, and our glory." In the following pages is an attempt to relieve the sterility, and unravel the obscurity, that hangs over the church history of the period immediately preceding that referred to by Macaulay, but bearing

the same general characteristics. And the history of the Church in England during the reign of the first five Norman kings, is summed up in the history of the "Three Archbishops," Lanfranc, Anselm, and A'Becket.

From the time of the battle of Hastings to the reign of Henry the Second, the amalgamation of the two races, conquered and conquerors, Saxon and Norman, was gradually progressing; and in the three great churchmen of the period we have an illustration of the union that was going forward; Lanfranc and Anselm belonging, in character and sympathies, if not literally in birth, to the Norman race, while A'Becket was more allied to the Saxons in birth, and partook more also of their character. In the Christian church at large, without the limits of England, stirring events were also in progress. The times of Gregory the Sixth and Hildebrand, of Urban the First and Urban the Second, of the Pope and Antipope, of the Council of Clermont, were times of great importance in the history of the growing power of the Roman bishops. At periods like these our island always rose into importance,

as a prey for which it was worth while for both parties to make some efforts; and the contest of which England was often the scene between the power of the church and the power of the crown, was watched with no small interest by crowned and mitred heads throughout Christendom. Anselm and A'Becket both openly upheld the privileges of the church and of the bishop of Rome, in opposition to that of the king, and both with varying success. A record of the incidents of these contests will be found to occupy a considerable space in the volume.

The name of Thomas A'Becket is especially one of interest to every English reader. The romantic stories of his birth and parentage, his sudden elevation to the highest civil dignity in the country, his power over the young and impetuous king, his sudden change when raised to the archiepiscopal dignity, the reluctance with which he signed the famous "Constitutions of Clarendon," so hostile to the interests of his church, his subsequent bitter humiliation, the dislike and jealousy felt towards him by Henry, his tragical death, and the remorse of the king,—are facts which have made a strong

impression on the mind of every child when first initiated into the rudiments of English History. It has been thought, therefore, that an attempt to present the Life of A'Becket, combined with those of his great predecessors, may not be unacceptable to many English readers.

CONTENTS.

LANFRANC.

	PAGE
I. NIGHT AND MORNING	1
II. PAVIA AND AVRANCHES	4
III. BEC	12
IV. LITERATURE AND SCHOOLS OF THE MIDDLE AGES	21
V. MATILDA OF FLANDERS AND WILLIAM OF NOR- MANDY	31
VI. THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES, AND THE MONK OF CLUNI	39
VII. THE CHAMPION OF ORTHODOXY	53
VIII. THE NORMAN CONQUEST	69
IX. THE POPE AND THE ENGLISH PRELATES	85
X. THE PRIMATE IN COUNCIL	94
XI. INCIDENTS OF NORMAN RULE	112
XII. THE PRIMATE'S LAST ACTS AND DEATH	137

ANSELM.

I. Aoust and Avranches	151
II. Cloister Life	156
III. Nolo Episcopari	163

	PAGE
IV. ANSELM BECOMES ARCHBISHOP . . .	175
V. ANSELM'S QUARREL WITH THE KING . .	196
VI. AN ILLUSTRATIVE EPISODE . . .	219
VII. ANSELM IN EXILE	240
VIII. INVESTITURES	272
IX. THE LAST YEARS OF ANSELM	295

THOMAS A'BECKET.

I. DISPUTED PEDIGREE AND ROMANTIC PARENTAGE	313
II. THE LONDON OF GILBERT A'BECKET . . .	326
III. EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT	336
IV. THE CHANCELLOR AND COURTIER . . .	342
V. THE ENVOY AND SOLDIER	354
VI. ELEVATION TO THE PRIMACY	360
VII. PRIVILEGE AND PREROGATIVE	367
VIII. CONSTITUTIONS OF CLARENDON . . .	385
IX. COUNCIL OF NORTHAMPTON	395
X. FLIGHT AND EXILE	412
XI. RETURN AND DEATH	436

LANFRANC.

CHAPTER I.

NIGHT AND MORNING.

TOWARDS the close of a day in the year 1042, a young man was descending a slope of country lying between Avranches and the Norman city of Rouen. It was bounded on the south and most elevated part by a wood, and on the north by a valley, through which ran a small stream, giving its name to the neighbourhood. He had not long left the wood, and was nearly two miles from the valley before him, when he was suddenly attacked by robbers, who violently bound his hands behind him, and tied his capuce, or loose cloak, before his eyes; then, having taken all he had about him, they led him back to the wood, where they left him to bemoan his fate.

In a condition so unenviable and hopeless, nothing was left him but “patient endurance” or fretful

complaint. At first he indulged in the latter, lamenting with loud cries his unfortunate situation ; but at length, as the silent night closed around him, he turned his thoughts in the direction of Heaven, desiring rather to ask for help than doubt of its coming. But when he attempted to do so, he found he could not—that he was acquainted with no form of prayer. He was not an ignorant man, but on the contrary was possessed of all the science and learning of his age ; and yet he had so neglected religion and religious exercises, that now he was destitute even of the solace they could have afforded him. “Now he saw with Ecclesiastes, though he had not as yet learnt the use of ecclesiastical writings, that the things of this world are but vanity.” * Thus, captive and weary, in the darkness of the night, and in the midst of a wood, he made a vow, that if he lived to recover liberty and strength he would become a monk in some poor monastery, and there devote himself to a religious life.

Consoled and strengthened by this resolution, he waited for the dawn ; and about the morning twilight hearing the footsteps of approaching travellers, he called out loudly for their assistance ; and they, after some hesitation, came to him, and, releasing him, led him back to the road. In answer to his inquiries for a poor monastery, they directed him to one, than which a poorer or more abject could not be found, “built by a man of God,” not far from where they stood ; and shewing him the way, they departed.

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii, p. 40.

He turned his steps in the direction they had pointed, went in search of the abbey they had described, and found it upon the side of the stream, in the valley at the end of the road along which he had been journeying the previous night.

Arrived at the house, he found that the poverty of the place was its chief characteristic. The abbot was engaged in a manual and servile occupation, working with his own hands, and surrounded by a few monks. The traveller, addressing the abbot, said, * “God save thee;” and the abbot replying, “God bless thee,” asked, “Art thou a Lombard?” He said, “I am.” “Art thou a monk?” asked the abbot. “I wish to be,” he answered. The abbot then called a monk named Roger, and directed him to lay before the young man the book of the rules appointed by St. Benedict, the founder of their order. The book having been brought and read through, the stranger desired to be admitted to the brotherhood of the monastery. The abbot, hearing this, and feeling the stranger might be of standing and importance, agreed to his desire; and Lanfranc of Pavia entered as a tyro in the abbey he was destined to render famous.

* Vit. : Lanfr. : Mil. : Crisp. : D'Achery, Paris.

CHAPTER II.

PAVIA AND AVRANCHES.

SUCH is the legend connected, by nearly all the monkish biographers of Lanfranc, with his determination to take the monastic vow. We have placed it in the first chapter of this history, not because we regard it as truthful, but because it introduces him to the reader's notice at its first important period—and if its results be regarded, the most important—besides which, it gives, in a graphic and lively manner, and nearly in the words of his contemporaries, the estimate they formed of his previous life and studies, looked at from their points of view, and through the media of their prejudices.

The accounts of Lanfranc's early life are not very full in detail, but such as we have will enable us to trace with tolerable certainty the path that he followed till it issued in Bec. We propose doing this in the present chapter.

Lanfranc was not a native of France; he first travelled thither about 1036. He was born at Pavia, the capital of Lombardy, in the year 1005, and was destined by his parents for the profession of the

law.* His family was of senatorial rank ; his father, Hambald, being one of the principal magistrates of the city, and keeper of the public archives.† While he was yet young, he lost his parents by death ; but, continuing his studies, he soon exhausted the educational resources of his native place, which he quitted for Bologna, then celebrated for its schools of civil law. His love of knowledge is also said to have led him to Cologne.‡ Soon after, he returned to Pavia, stored with not only all the learning proper to his profession, but also of all the arts and sciences then known and cultivated. He at once commenced pleading in the courts of law, and soon became distinguished for the easy flow of his eloquence, as well as his legal skill. The latter was in such request, that his opinions were sought by the most experienced juriconsults of his time. § And as to the former, one of his biographers speaks of him as the “youthful orator, who, when pleading a cause, frequently triumphed over his veteran opponents, and by a torrent of eloquence won the prize from men long in the habit of eloquent speaking.” ||

“It is not known,” says Berington, “why, when thus prosperously engaged, he again left Pavia, crossed the Alps, and traversed France, and about the year 1036, fixed his residence at Avranches in Normandy, surrounded by many scholars.” ¶

The reason we conceive to be this :—The naturally lofty and spiritual mind of Lanfranc had grown weary

* † Milo Crispin in Vita. Lanf., 1. ‡ Biograph. Univ.

§ || Ord. Vital. ¶ Histor. Liter., Book iv.

of the low and barren paths in which the juriseonsult of Bologna or the advocate of Pavia was condemned to walk. Large and expansive ideas had begun to occupy his thoughts, and ill comported with the employments of a life whose every expression was artificial and monotonous. Questions had arisen within him, questions of a metaphysieal or philosophic character, to which he could find no solution in the studies or practice of civil law. It was only natural, therefore, that he should turn his eyes across the Alps, to a country where mind had more activity and freedom, and where these questions had been debated for two or three preceding centuries.

Whatever were his motives, however, Lanfranc appeared at Avranches, at the date already given, as a teacher in one of the schools that were then open to the younger branches of the French nobility. We shall have occasion to speak of the subjects of instruction, and the methods employed in these schools, when we come to his more famous one of Bee; it will, therefore, only be necessary to say now, that his fame chiefly rested on his acute and refined dialectical skill. He was a perfect master of logic, and is said to have trained scholars who were prone, at every opportunity, to engage in controversy.* The study of logic was in accordance with the spirit of the age, although what was then called by that name was rather a system of words and rules than a method based upon the observation of natural and mental phenomena. This dialectical tendency had been

* Berington, Book iv.

created under the influence of Arabian teaching and literature. It was during the ninth century that the scholars of France and Germany began to travel to the cities of Cordova and Seville—the seats of Arabian learning—for the purpose of receiving instruction in the science of geometry, or such elementary matters as passed under that name; and it was by this means that the works of Aristotle came to be known, and his system of logic to be cultivated.*

For a considerable period, these studies were known only to a few, and were pursued simply for themselves; but afterwards their influence could be seen in the spirit of theological controversy, in the desire of many minds for a more exact and definite expression of the doctrines of the church, and in an evident bias towards metaphysical inquiries.

It must not be supposed that this condition of things was universal at the time of Lanfranc's arrival at Avranches. So far from this being the case, there were but a few men whose minds were intent upon the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The general aspect presented to the eye of the observer, was sad and discouraging. The clergy were ignorant and idle; the language and literature of ancient Rome, which should have been especially cultivated by them, were greatly neglected; and the Latin which they commonly used is said to have become almost barbarous.†

It must be evident, these things being so, that an immense work had to be accomplished by Lan-

* Berington, iii & iv.

† See Berington, Giessler, and others quoted by them.

franc, or for him, before he could find an audience prepared to share his desires, or receive the speculations of his daring mind. The subjects which he taught in his lectures he would doubtless regard merely as the means by which truth might ultimately be reached, but certainly not as themselves the end—methods that could be applied to the solution of the problems arising either from his own nature or the necessities of the age.

But the line that marked the boundary of popular inquiry, did not exist in his case and in that of others of his time: and consequently we find him engaged in wide and expansive fields of thought; pushing his investigations to the utmost verge of all reliable data, and inquiring into subjects which his contemporaries must have regarded as certain and conclusive. An incident is related of him at this time, which throws a strong and clear light upon the course of thought which he ordinarily followed. He is reported to have retired to a solitary spot, beside the river Seine, to meditate on the mysterious essence of the Infinite, when he saw a boy ladling out the waters of the river that ran before him into a little well. His curiosity arrested, he asked the boy what he proposed to do. "To empty yon deep into this well," was the answer. "That thou canst never do," said the scholar. "Nor canst thou exhaust the deep on which thou dost meditate, into the well of thy reason," replied the boy, as he vanished from sight.

It is supposed by the translator of the above that

Lanfranc had explained in a parable the process through which his mind was passing at this time, and that his biographers, understanding him literally, have produced the legend as a fact.* Whether this be the case or not, we may fairly deduce from it the opinion, that the mind of Lanfranc was struggling to break those huge mysteries which lie round about every form of religious faith, and which must be passed ere a man can find himself within the sacred enclosure. We have supposed him leaving the law courts of his native city, that he might devote his energies to the cultivation of the purer sciences ; we have seen that his intellectual nature grew weary of the pursuit of those objects which were merely limited and temporary ; and now we behold him still unsatisfied. There is still a longing to which nothing answers, a void that no science can fill ; the spirit within him asserts its right to be heard ; and therefore he brings his speculations to a pause at the threshold of the church. Reason bears her gains, to lay them at the feet and service of Faith, and becomes henceforth her patient handmaid.

This, we take it, is the true theory of Lanfranc's sudden removal from Pavia to Normandy, and of his as suddenly closing his school and disappearing from Avranches. The story related in the first chapter must be regarded merely as a fable, invented probably in after years by the monkish historians, to bring into disrepute secular learning in comparison with religious knowledge and exercises. His contemporaries of the

* See notes to Bulwer's Harold.

cell were not generally remarkable for that which they have disparaged, and which universal fame has ascribed to Lanfranc; and it is not a matter for wonder, that they should have endeavoured, even by fable, to exaggerate the value of that religious feeling which they did possess, at the expense of that intellectual culture which they did not possess, though found in one who, by giving the spoils of his scholarship to their cause, became its brightest ornament in that age.

It has been supposed, however, that Lanfranc's chief motive to take this step was his ambition—that however famous he might be as a teacher, he felt he was still only a layman, and as such he could never rise to those eminent positions in the state which the clergy and nobility everywhere divided.* To a certain extent this may be true; indications of ambition are scattered through his after life, but none appear earlier than this. Ambition is more frequently the flower than the root of success: and besides, an ambitious man would hardly have chosen the monastery of Bee as the stepping-stone to power; there were others in which his talents would have found instant recognition, and his sacrifice of secular honour a quick reward; but Bee was poor, unknown, and unvisited, in every way unfitted to be the home of a man with such a purpose. No; it is far more natural and more grateful to suppose that his mind lacked the repose and satisfaction that can be found only in certainty of belief, and congeniality of occupation;

* Wright's Biog. Liter. Brit.

and that, because the church offered him both, he devoted himself to her service.

However this may have been, Lanfranc entered the monastery of Bec in the year 1042, being thirty-seven years of age.

CHAPTER III.

BEC.

WHEN Lanfranc entered the abbey of Bec it was neither venerable for its antiquity nor beautiful in its structure; what there is of glory belonging to it has been since acquired, it being then chiefly remarkable for the poverty of its inmates and the piety of its abbot.

From him it is usually called Bec Herluin, or Hellouin, he being its founder and first abbot. In the early part of his life he had been a knight, and in one of the skirmishes incident to his condition, had been worsted by Gislebert, Count of Ponthieu. Seeing most of his companions either dead or prisoners, he attempted to save himself by flight; but fearing he might fall into the hands of his enemies, he made a vow, that if God would deliver him from this danger, he would build a monastery to his honour. The safety he desired he obtained, and, in conformity with his promise, he retired from the world, and received the sacred dress of a monk. Soon

* Ord. Vit., vol. i., p. 383.

† Willel. Gem.

after, being joined by others, he was consecrated abbot of his little establishment. The place he had chosen for its site did not prove very suitable to such an edifice, it being a large open plain, with only a limited supply of water—no fountain nearer than two miles. After some little time, therefore, he removed with his companions to his own estate, which, from a little stream flowing there, was called Bee. Situated at the bottom of a valley, its surrounding hills covered by a thick wood, it was in every way fitted to be the retreat of a community of recluses.*

Their mode of life was extremely simple and unostentatious—their time being generally divided between the exercises prescribed by the church and the employments of the field.

We have a lively picture from the pen of an old chronicler, himself a monk, of the way in which time passed with Herluin and his followers in their first convent.† In the fields about their dwelling, at seed time, the abbot might be seen carrying in his hand a spade or a rake, helping or directing others; around him was his little company of monks, employing themselves until the close of day in a variety of ways; some clear the ground of briars and thorns; others, carrying manure upon their shoulders, scatter it abroad; these rake the soil, those cast in the seed; no one eats the bread of idleness. At the hour for performing the offices of the church, all assemble. The daily meal is frugal and primitive: bread of the finest flour, vegetables with salt, and water—not

* Willel. Gem.

† Ibid.

always the clearest—forming their limited dietary. The chronieler who relates Lanfrane's entrance to Bee, describes the abbot as being employed with his own hands in repairing a furnaee, or oven, one of the necessary adjunets of every monastery.*

In manners and mind the inmates of Bec were not so worthy of our admiration, being extremely ignorant, and not remarkable for any large amount of piety. The abbot, who was probably not far in advance of his monks in respect of learning, but was, however, very superior to them in what should have been their chief characteristic—religious principles—was occasionally in great trouble and grief through the quarrels in which they engaged. † ‡

The knowledge of a few such facts as these, scattered through the records of the middle ages, may go far to cool the envy we are inclined to indulge, when we hear of the fraternal peace and perpetual contentment of monastic institutions, and to abate our regret that they are no longer the common property of Christendom. Even without such notices, a little reflection might show us that the natural tendency of these communities must be ever towards the degradation, rather than the elevation, of the mind and character of their members. It would surely have been as marvellous as satisfactory if no perplexities of the kind recorded had ever arisen to disturb the tranquillity of Abbot Herluin, when we consider what different tempers, manners, and constitutions were

* Milo Crispinus., cap. i: Vit. Lanfr., D'Achery.

† Milo Crisp. Vit. Lanfr., cap. ii. ‡ Williel. Gem.

shut up in his narrow house. What feelings must there have been forced back upon the heart, that in a more natural home would have flowed forth in love and joy ; what affections must there have been wasted for want of objects on which to bestow themselves ; what a prison must that have been where no female face ever shed its sunny smile, and no child ever gambolled in guileless glee !

But, besides the abbot, there was now another at Bee, who would look with anything but satisfaction upon the behaviour of his companions, and who might possibly feel some little disappointment at the reality of monastic life, compared to the expectations he had entertained of it. As a novice, too, his influence would be confined to example, though that might not be the least potent he could exert.

We hear little of Lanfranc during the early part of his stay at Bee, except that for three years after his admission he lived the ordinary and quiet life of a monk. He had been regularly admitted, at the end of his year's probation, a member of the Benedictine order ; and he does not seem to have disgraced its founder by any want of fervour as a rigid and pious brother.

If he were—as has been represented—simply an ambitious Italian, whose keen eye had detected that the road to preferment and honour lay through the cloister, his proud spirit would here find enough to humble and chafe it. Everything that could abase the heart, and teach practical humility, was enjoined by the rules of the order. The junior was to pay constant respect to his senior, to rise from table when

he passed, and not to sit till bidden ; both juniors and seniors were to maintain perfect silence, except at certain hours, and to obey the order of the abbot without question or scruple.

The employments were of a servile and, to a man of cultivated mind, of a vexatious nature. Each monk took his turn in the kitchen, and for one week prepared the food of the others, receiving for this service an extra allowance of wine, and at the end of the week delivered the platters clean to his successor. But the two most important and distinguishing characteristics of the order were silence and obedience. To such a ludicrous extent was the one carried, that when the monks were employed in the "Scriptorium," or writing-room, they were not allowed to ask for anything they might require, but to make signs for it. Thus, "for a book, in general, they were to extend their hand, and move it, as if turning over the leaf of a book." For a particular book a particular sign was used ; for example, to distinguish a book written by a heathen, the monk was to scratch his ear like a dog.† And as an instance of the obedience which the monks were accustomed to pay their superiors, we give the following anecdote, which we find recorded of Lanfranc, and which occurred during the early part of his cloister life.* It was customary for the monks to assemble after supper, or even-song, on fast-days, to listen to the reading of the brothers, in the Collations of Cassian, or one of the fathers. The post of reader had been assigned to

* Mil. Crisp. : Vit. Lanfr., cap. ii. † Maitland's Dark Ages.

him ; and while pronouncing the word dōcēre, he was stopped by the presiding prior, who desired him to say dōcĕre, the very reverse of correct. So well, however, had Lanfrane learned to submit himself and his opinion to those above him, that he made no scruple to falsify the quantity and obey the senior, and immediately complied. It must not be supposed, because we see here the obedience of the monk, that necessarily there was the acquiescence of the man, or that the scholar would feel other than contempt ; though it is only reasonable to suppose he would not be so unprepared as many a modern reader might be for such a display of ignorance.

The results that we have seen arising from the influence of the monastic life upon the disposition and habits of the monks, may be expected from the mind and intellect. The tendency was a downward, deteriorating one. The original intention of the founders of the system was neither to make students, nor multiply manuscripts ; and if in after years manuscripts were executed, homilies and commentaries written, or chronicles composed in the stillness of the cloister, we are not to consider these as results of the profession, which belong rather to the industry of individuals. If scholars made the monastery their home, and in its retirement cultivated their minds, and enlarged their acquaintance with truth, we must not regard them as other than types of a small though distinguished class. It was possible to be a devout follower of St. Benedict, a punctilious performer of religious services, a rigid exactor of personal sacrifices,

and yet have a most unintelligent mind, and a perfect horror of intellectual pursuits. The great majority of men who adopted the cowl and tunic did so with the vain hope of compelling themselves to yield obedience to moral precept; but with intellectual pursuits they had little or no sympathy. Of this we have an instance in the Abbey of St. Evroult, during the abbaey of Father Theodoric. He was an intelligent and industrious man, whose convent library was filled with the manuscripts executed by its inmates. But for his admonitions to labour, and injunctions to diligence, he was hated by some of the monks, who preferred secular concerns to their religious duties. "Alas! they censured him for that which merited the highest respect, while they muttered, 'This man is not fit to be an abbot, for he undervalues and neglects all worldly thrift. But how are the men of prayer to subsist, if the men of the plough are not forthcoming? He must be a fool who is more anxious about reading and writing in his monastery than about the means of procuring subsistence for the brethren.' Some of the monks indulged in insolent talk of this description, wronging the man of God with more of the same sort."*

Owing to the depravity of manners, the ignorance of the brothers, and to an increasing austerity of feeling in himself, Lanfranc soon began to grow weary of the society of Bec, and desirous of quitting the cloister altogether, that he might betake himself to the solitude of a hermit's life.* To prepare himself for this,

* Ord. Vit., vol. 1., p. 408.

he refrained from the ordinary food of the convent, and begged to be supplied with roots of thistles and other vegetables, feigning a weakness of the stomach, for which these would be a remedy. When he had accustomed himself to this diet for a sufficient time, he intended to escape by night, but was suddenly stopped by the grief and persuasion of Herluin ; who having been made acquainted with the fact (by an apparition, we are told) called Lanfranc to him, and with many tears, and much distress of mind, begged him to remain. He pointed out to him the condition of his monks, confessed his own inability to govern them, and avowed that his hope had always been to transfer the burden of rule to him.

Lanfranc was at first greatly astonished at the abbot's knowledge of his intention ; but assured that God had revealed it to him, for the purpose of retaining him at Bec, he readily acquiesced in his superior's desire, and determined to relinquish the wish for a solitary life. Herluin shortly after raised him to the rank of prior of the monastery, putting under his care all things relating to its internal affairs. The position of prior was only one step below the abbot, and was therefore a post of great honour and authority. We are not aware that Lanfranc made any immediate use of his promotion to reform the habits of the monks ; but he soon after prevailed upon the abbot to allow a school to be opened, similar to the one he had presided over at Avranches. His pretext for this was the poverty of the monastery ; and probably this was one

* Mil. Crisp. ii.

reason, but not the only one, or the greatest. He always showed a contempt for ignorance, not only in his brethren, but in others of a more exalted station, and was not insensible to fame. But whether he were or not, fame attended ; and in this new position he became even more favourably known as a teacher than he had been while at Avranches. His old pupils returned to him, and new ones joined them in crowds ; clerks, sons of dukes, scholars of high renown, masters, powerful chiefs, and noblemen of high birth, hurried to his school, and enrolled themselves as his pupils.

CHAPTER IV.

LITERATURE AND SCHOOLS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

How cold and desolate is the aspect of a country just recovering from a violent inundation! No verdure clothes the untilled earth with beauty—no fields look glad with smiling crops—no groups of dwellings speak of wedded love and peaceful labour; but instead thereof are seen the scattered fragments of what were lately the abodes of happiness, or the implements of industry, or the materials of wealth. Everywhere are men beginning life anew—their fortunes all to create or to recover. All is impaired, save nature, and the strength of the labourer.

Such a scene may be conceived to represent the appearance of Europe during the early part of the middle ages. Across every boundary, down every fair slope, over every pleasant plain, had rolled flood after flood of barbarian conquest. No power was sufficient to give it check, no barrier to stop its progress; but as it rushed onward, it swept before it all that was venerable with age, or blooming with youth. Even Rome, the centre of civilization, was overwhelmed. It was not till all the old land-marks had

been obliterated that the waters began to subside. Little by little, they settled in fresh channels, and revealed the scattered wrecks of ancient institutions. Of law, and literature, and commerce, scarce a vestige remained ; even the necessary arts of life were barely known. But destruction had developed fresh forces ; the tide that brought with it desolation, had also borne upon its wave new strength. A bold and hardy race of men had settled in Europe, who, besides strong physical natures, were possessed of warm and glowing imaginations ; and they, under a proper culture, gave promise that, if they had destroyed her ancient civilization, they would give to her a more enduring and vigorous life. The aspect of Europe at this hour, shows the fulfilment of that promise ; but between the brightness of to-day, and the thick night that then wrapped the mind of Europe in its sable folds, stretches a gloomy and sometimes unpropitious morning. We are accustomed to speak of that period as the Dark Ages, though the name can only properly be applied to its earlier portion. As a whole, it can scarcely deserve that epithet, when we remember what bright though evanescent beams shot athwart it, and in how mild and peaceful a dawn it finally issued.

The middle ages may be said to have commenced a few years prior to the time of Charlemagne. It was he who gave a fixity and temporary limit to the possessions of the different races, and who, having consolidated his own power, found leisure to attend to the social and intellectual interests of his subjects.

He invited from various parts of Europe such men of learning and intelligence as were known, and by their advice and assistance founded schools for the promotion of the arts and sciences. While he lived, learning was encouraged and fostered; but his successors, unable to retain the splendid kingdom he had bequeathed to them, were totally incapable, however much they might have desired it, of supporting educational establishments. The consequence was, science and art everywhere decayed; and the morning that looked so fair and bright was once more overcast and clouded. Even in Rome, where religion held her seat, literature was neglected and forgotten.

In attempting to obtain some acquaintance with the schools and methods of instruction there pursued, during that portion of the middle ages about which we are now engaged, we are unfortunately not able to confine our attention to that particular period, as few accounts are preserved of it, more than of others.

A modern reader, and especially one engaged in education, would be interested to know what forms the instructions of such a teacher as Lanfranc would take, what books he would expound, what subjects he would teach, whether his pupils were dependent solely on their memories for the retention of his discourses, or whether there were text books to which they could refer. It is to be lamented that no pupil or disciple of such a man has left us a record of these things, or that no student at Bec had also been its

chronicler. But, failing such information, we must content ourselves with the general descriptions and accidental notices which occur in the pages of the ordinary histories of ancient and modern writers; remembering that they extend over a period of two or three centuries, but one in which neither the schools nor books underwent any considerable change.

The schools of the middle ages were of three kinds. First: Those established in connexion with cathedrals. Second: Conventual, or those annexed to monasteries. And third: Secular, national, or municipal schools, independent of religious institutions. Of these last, such men as Charlemagne and our own Alfred were the originators and most prominent supporters. Charlemagne especially devoted himself to the establishment of seminaries, and was greatly assisted by the learned of his time. The Bishop of Orleans, under his direction, opened parish schools, in which the education offered was gratuitous. "To Alcuin," we are told, "the universities of Paris, Tours, Fulden, Soissons, and many others owe their origin and increase."* The schools of Paris, that became so celebrated in the twelfth, date their birth as far back as the ninth century; and it will be remembered, Lanfranc himself held one of the schools at Avranches, prior to his entrance at Bec.

But a more important and more numerous class of schools were the conventual, or monastic seminaries, which the younger members of society were free to

* Henry, Hist. Eng., Bk. ii, vol. iv.

attend. The originators, and most of the supporters of monastic institutions, enjoined upon their followers the necessity of opening schools in connection with their foundations, and the result was that, during the seventh century for example, many monasteries were founded, both in England and on the continent, in each of which schools were opened. But, as it was shown in the last chapter, the monks were not an intellectual class of men, and the labour of teaching was not generally in favour with them. Owing to this circumstance, and the universal decay of learning during the tenth century, schools were badly supported, and the cause of education progressed slowly. But towards the close of that period a more vigorous and intelligent spirit was apparent, and the desire for instruction again took possession of the minds of men.

We have already seen what was the condition of Normandy on the arrival of Lanfranc at Avranches—that at that time the learning, and love of learning, which characterised him, were very uncommon. Still, even then, there were schools in existence; and it is probable that at no time were they totally extinct.

Before attempting any description of these schools in the eleventh century, it will be advisable to look at the more ancient institutions of the kind, and then observe what changes had taken place at the period under consideration, as by such a comparison the tendency which the studies of the middle ages took will be very perceptible.

The most common arrangement of the subjects of instruction between the eighth and twelfth centuries

was that known as the Trivium and Quadrivium, the first of which included grammar, dialectics, and rhetoric; the second,—music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. At no time in the middle ages does the whole of this course appear to have been studied. The laity were proverbially ignorant, and the clergy almost invariably idle. That most illustrious patron of learning, Charlemagne, was incapable of writing; and one of the most industrious of the clergy speaks of the “long and intricate calculations of arithmetic, as sufficient to overwhelm the mind, and throw it into despair.” *

A better idea may be formed of the nature of the instruction imparted by the teachers of the ancient schools by the two following quotations than by any description compiled from later authors. The first is from a letter addressed by Alcuin to his friend and patron Charlemagne, from his abbey of St. Martin of Tours, whither he had retired:—

“As you advised me, and as my own inclinations lead, I am sedulously employed within these walls in imparting to some instruction from the pot of the Holy Scriptures, while I labour to inebriate others with the old wine of the ancient schools; feed others with the apples of grammatical subtilty; and illumine others with the arrangement of the stars, placed as in the painted ceiling of some great edifice.” †

The next is an account of Fulda, very celebrated in

* Henry, bk. ii. ch. iv.

† Berington, bk. iii. The whole letter is given in Dr. Henry's History, vol. iv., bk. ii.

its day, and conducted by a pupil of Alcuin, Rabanus Maurus : — “As the age of his pupils permitted, or their abilities seemed to require, he instructed some in the rules of grammar, others in those of rhetoric ; while he conducted the more advanced into the deeper researches of human and divine philosophy, freely communicating whatever they wished to learn. At the same time, they were expected to commit to writing, in prose or verse, the occurrences of the day.” *

The changes in the course of study that had taken place at the beginning of the eleventh century do not appear to have been very great. The division of subjects remained the same as in the eighth century, but was not more strictly attended to than then. The only part of the Trivium that received much attention was the Latin language, taught from the little treatise by Donatus, and from the extracts of Priscian. A growing importance attached to the art of reasoning. In the next century this subject, or dialectics, as it was called, received more than its due share of attention ; but in this age it was regarded rather as an abstract science than as one to be applied to the solution of theological and ethical questions ; and even Lanfranc himself denies that he makes use of it, when arguing with Berengarius the doctrine of the real presence, although his fame as a teacher rests almost entirely upon the success with which he taught this most intellectual of the arts.

In concluding* this part of our subject, it will not

* Berington, bk. iii.

be irrelevant to insert an interesting description of a school established at Cambridge in the twelfth century, and out of which arose the present university. It relates to a more advanced period than that of which we have been speaking,—but it is so vivid an illustration of student life, that it appeared no anachronism to the writer of the life of Lanfranc prefixed to his works, who has inserted it in notes.*

“Master Gislebert, with three other monks, went every day to Cambridge; and having hired a certain public barn, taught the sciences openly, and in a little time collected a great concourse of scholars. For in the second year after their arrival, the number of their scholars from town and country increased so much, that there was no house, barn, nor church, capable of containing them. For this reason they separated into different parts of the town; and, imitating the plan of Orleans, Brother Odo, a famous grammarian and satirist of those times, read grammar, according to the doctrine of Priscian, and Remigius upon him, to the boys and younger students assigned to him, early in the morning. At one o’clock Brother Terricus, an acute sophist, read Aristotle’s logics, according to the introductions and commentaries of Porphyry and Averrois, to those who were further advanced. At three, Brother William read lectures on Tully’s rhetoric and Quintilian’s institutions. But Master Gislebert being ignorant of the English, but very expert in the Latin and French languages, preached in the several churches to the people on Sundays and holidays.” †

* Lanf. Op. : D’Achery.

† Henry’s England, bk. iii. ch. iv. s. 3.

In the monastery and the monastic school, the subject which held the first place was, of course, the service of the church; and as that was written in Latin, the study of that language was necessitated. Owing to the influence of Gregory the Great, who lived at the close of the sixth century, the classics ceased to be regarded as the proper models for Christian students, and men were therefore left to struggle on amid the perplexities and difficulties of a language, without those most necessary of all guides, its purest writers. Hence, for a considerable time, the value of a book was estimated rather by its agreement with the opinions of the church, than by the elegance of its composition; and the moral writings of Gregory himself, although they were compiled without regard to the rules of grammar, soon held an important place in the estimation of the age. The world, however, grew wiser, and churchmen with it; the oblivion that Gregory desired for Cicero and Virgil, yawned for himself; and by the close of the tenth century, his writings, and the meagre introductions to rhetoric, were neglected by scholars for the works of Cicero and Quintilian.*

In grammar, the work most esteemed was called a Donat, owing to the fact of its having been compiled by Donatus, a grammarian of the fourth century, and, in connection with another by Priseian, was in general use. As a scholar proceeded he was introduced to the "Cato," and the "Doctrinal," written by Sauvage, and other books, which were used for

* Berington, bk. ii.

Hallam Introd. Lit. of Europe, p. 6.

construing, and consisted of sentences, moralities, maxims of conduct, and even precepts of behaviour. Some were composed of precepts and examples united, as the "Chastisement of a Father;" but the morals were very insipid. With regard to the classical authors read at this time, great diversity of opinion exists; but it is certain that, shortly after the Conquest, Virgil, Ovid, and others were daily studied in the schools.* Ingulphus, speaking of the reign of Edward the Confessor, says, "I was educated in letters in my tender years at Westminster; from whence I was afterwards sent to the study of Oxford, where I made greater progress in the Aristotelian philosophy than any of my contemporaries, and became very well acquainted with the rhetoric of Cicero."† Dr. Lingard, commenting upon this passage, while he admits the doubt as to the date originally assigned to the work of Ingulphus, asserts that the classical authors mentioned in it were much more studied in the eleventh century than is generally supposed.

* Fosbroke, *British Monachism*.

† *History of Croyland Abbey*, p. 147. Bohn's ed.

CHAPTER V.

MATILDA OF FLANDERS AND WILLIAM OF NORMANDY.

Nothing can be more certain than that the contemporaries and immediate followers of Lanfranc believed that he was the scholar to whom the revival of the study of classical literature was most indebted. It is hardly possible to turn to a single passage in which he is mentioned, without finding some mark of the writer's glowing admiration coupled with his name. By one, he is spoken of as the student who had restored learning to its ancient condition; by another, "as a powerful expositor of difficult questions in both philosophy and divinity, under whom the Normans received the first rudiments of literature;" by a third, "as a man worthy to be compared to the ancients, in knowledge and in religion; of whom it may be truly said 'Cato the third is descended from heaven:' so much had an heavenly savour tinctured his heart and tongue; so much was the whole western world excited to the knowledge of the liberal arts by his learning; and so earnestly did the monastic profession labour in the works of religion either from his example or authority." *

* Wm. Malmes. Bohn's ed. p. 300.

His learning is said to have been so remarkable, that "to understand the admirable genius and erudition of Lanfranc, one ought to be an Herodian in grammar, an Aristotle in dialectics, a Tully in rhetoric, an Augustine and Jerome, and other expositors of the law and grace, in the sacred scriptures. Athens itself, in its most flourishing state, renowned for the excellency of its teaching, would have honoured Lanfranc in every branch of eloquence and discipline, and would have desired to receive instruction from his wise maxims." * His reputation was commensurate with his learning, and "spread throughout all Europe; and many hastened to receive lessons from him out of France, Gascony, Brittany, and Flanders." Among these were many who afterwards rose to high and important offices, both in the church and state, and considerably influenced the literature and after-history of Europe. Among the crowds of students who visited Bec, there were some, however, who were more proud of their master's skill in argument than instructed by his precepts or enriched by his philosophy. They are represented as puffed-up and elated to such a degree by the dialectical tact they had acquired under his tuition, that wherever they went they carried his principles, and displayed the utmost fervour of controversy. They pelted all their opponents with syllogisms; and as school-boys make men and castles of snow, that they may have the pleasure of demolishing them with missiles of the same, so these disciples of Lanfranc sought difficulties of logic that they might

* Ord. Vit. Bohn's ed., vol. ii. p. 40.

disperse them by its rules. Such popularity was the penalty due for all that fame had bestowed, and was of a kind, we should think, Lanfranc could hardly have desired; we should at least have expected he would have striven as much as possible to diminish the enthusiasm of his students, by giving their science a more practical and private vent. Instances occur, however, in which his own conduct appears to be far from prudent, and sometimes indeed arrogant in the extreme. One of them had so important an influence upon him, and the fortunes of those with whom he lived, that it must be recorded, especially as it forms an introduction, though a not very amiable one, to the third great epoch in his life, that in which he was brought into constant communication with William duke of Normandy.

The partiality which all the chroniclers of these times evince for Lanfranc, make it difficult to believe they have not sometimes allowed their affection to colour their narratives, and do scanty justice to such of his contemporaries as were so unfortunate as to oppose him. All of them, however, agree in this, that Herfast, chaplain to duke William, being, prior to Lanfranc's arrival, the most popular scholar of Normandy, but now eclipsed by his fame, was moved by envy at the praises so lavishly bestowed upon him, and determined to judge for himself by attending one of the lectures of this Lombard student. Accordingly, followed by an immense retinue of servants and horsemen, and with great pomp, he visited Bec. But Lanfranc, we are told, perceived immediately he was only

an ignorant man, and therefore determined to humble him, which he did by placing before him an Italian spelling book—thus intimating his want of knowledge of that language. The poor ecclesiastic, who had naturally expected a more respectful reception, was greatly inflamed by such treatment, and hurried back to lay the story of his wrongs before his master. The duke William, who, it would appear, had a private quarrel of his own with the monk, and was therefore already inclined to severity, took such measures as were sufficient to avenge the wrongs of a life-time. He ordered the monastery to be destroyed, and a little farm belonging to it to be burnt down, the monks to be dispersed, and Lanfranc to quit the kingdom. *

Sad, indeed, were the hearts of the poor monks of Bec when the terrible news came to them, and grieved was the soul of venerable Herluin. What could he now think of his beloved prior? Surely, far better had it been that he should have remained at Avranches, teaching unsanctified rhetoric, than that he should have brought fame to his house only to be its ruin at last. † Lanfranc, leaving the abbot and his monks to nurse their grief, or assuage it as best they could, sallied forth upon a lame and jaded horse to gain an audience of the duke, whom he met on the road to his palace. The singular figure of the monk, mounted upon his limping horse, drew an involuntary smile from William, who nevertheless demanded why his orders had not been attended to.

* *Scrip. x., chron., J. Brompton, p. 968. Henry de Knighton, 236.*

† *Mil. Crisp. in vit. Lanf., cap. iv.*

Lanfranc replied that it was impossible to obey the command to leave the kingdom, unless he were furnished with a better horse. The duke was pleased with the ready and facetious replies he obtained to all his questions, and Lanfranc soon gained pardon for himself and release for his brethren. He was dismissed with the assurance of future favour; and in the meanwhile, the restoration of the monastery, with the return of the monks to their deserted abode, was permitted. Once more Bec was in prosperity; the tidings brought to the monks soon dissipated their sorrows and dried their tears; they hurried back to their old home, and made its walls resound for a whole day with their joyous voices chanting *Te Deum*. Those parts of their monastery which had been destroyed were rebuilt; and their title to the lands attached to the abbey was confirmed by William.*

In the foregoing narrative there are two things which strike the mind as being very remarkable, and which, if it were not supported by other evidence, would go far to make us doubt the story altogether.

The first is the extraordinary severity of the duke, for what seems, after all, but a slight offence. And the second, the easy way in which Lanfranc dispersed his wrath, and avoided the punishment awarded him. Both, however, are explained when the circumstances in which William was placed at the time are known, and the part Lanfranc had taken respecting them.

The event must have happened about the year 1053, when Normandy was suffering under the anger

* *Mil. Crisp. vit. Lanf., cap iv.*

of the pope, caused by William's disobedience to his wishes. About a year previously (1052), he had espoused, at his castle of Angi, Matilda his cousin, the daughter of Baldwin, fifth earl of Flanders. The marriage was effected more by the impetuosity of William than by the desire of Matilda or her friends. For many years she had stoutly refused the affection he often pressed upon her; at first because she loved, or fancied she loved, a young Saxon; and afterwards, when she could not obtain his affection, on account of the strong antipathy her parents had to the birth and parentage of William. Seven years, however, of alternate hope and despair had made William take a most decided way of bringing the courtship to a close. He is said to have waited for her in the streets of Bruges as she returned from mass, to have rolled her in the mud, and after having struck her, to have mounted his horse and ridden off. This violent behaviour had the effect he probably intended to produce, and convinced Matilda and her friends that it were better to receive so impetuous a man as a relative, than have to withstand him as an enemy. They were accordingly married, three years afterwards, with great splendour. *

Unfortunately for their happiness, however, there was one who was neither to be intimidated by William's passion nor placated by his bribes from denouncing this marriage as an unrighteous and illegal affair. This was Mauger, uncle to William, and archbishop of Rouen. He "argued that the daughter of Richard

* Lives of Queens—Matilda, Ag. Strickland.

the Good having married a count of Flanders, Baldwin le Barbu, William and Matilda, being direct branches of this union, were cousins within the prohibited degrees." * In other words, that Elenora, the grandmother of Matilda, was likewise the aunt of William. Previous to the marriage, Mauger had contented himself by simply denouncing it as illegal, and warning William to desist from desiring it; but no sooner had it taken place than he hurled the last bolt of episcopal wrath, and excommunicated the offenders. Besides Mauger, the pontiff had resolutely refused to sanction the marriage, and we find that "by the authority of the pope, Normandy was deprived of all the holy offices." † Whatever might have been the opinion of the Norman clergy as to the policy of irritating so powerful a chief as William, they could not pretend to oppose the decision of their spiritual rulers; and therefore it is not surprising to find so zealous an ecclesiastic as Lanfranc entirely coinciding with Mauger, and blaming William for the step he had taken.

Were we simply to follow the narrative given above of the circumstances that brought Lanfranc into collision with William, we might infer that previously they had had no connection with each other, or at least that they had not been on terms of intimacy. Judging from other sources, however, it appears more than probable that Lanfranc had been the adviser and councillor of the duke prior to his marriage with Matilda, and that when it became necessary to make

* Roscoe's Life of Wm. the Conq. † Mil. Crisp. in vit. Lanf., cap. iii.

a positive avowal of his opinion, he decided on the side of the archbishop, and was consequently dismissed from the favour of William. Another writer * tells us, that William esteemed him as one of his ablest councillors, but that he incurred that prince's displeasure by blaming his marriage with Baldwin's daughter; and that being exiled from the court of his former master, he repaired to Nicholas at Rome. This statement partly agrees with one made by the writer of the life prefixed to his collected works, viz., that he had been an adviser of the duke, but was alienated from him by the slanderous representations of others. †

Whether Lanfranc had or had not been in the favour of William previous to the public insult offered to Herfast, if it be certain that he had censured him for an action which he had so long determined upon, there is no cause for wonder at the severity with which he was visited; nor need we be surprised at the facility with which he was reinstated in favour, when we learn that he shortly afterwards became the ambassador of the duke to Rome, to plead excuses for the very marriage he had so lately condemned.

Surprising as it may appear, such nevertheless was the case, the statement of which may form a fitting close to this chapter; and in the next will be seen how important was the journey then undertaken—not only to William and Lanfranc, but probably to the whole Roman church.

* Norm. Conq., Thierry, bk. iii.

† Mil. Crisp. D'Achery, cap. iii.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES, AND THE MONK OF CLUNI.

NEARLY ten years before Lanfranc set out upon his journey to the court of Rome, to negotiate conditions for the indulgence of William's marriage with Matilda, Bruno, bishop of Toul, had, attired as a pilgrim, crossed the Alps, as the elect of the emperor to the papal see. He was attended only by a monk, who was returning to Rome after a voluntary exile of little more than two years. This monk, of low stature and of lowly origin, was the famous Hildebrand, prior of Cluni, afterwards the more famous Gregory VII., whose life, up to that time, had been principally passed in the retirement of the monastic cell. He had been early educated in a monastery at Rome, and the effect of the training he received there was to develop within him a stern and self-denying devotion to the principles and authority of the church. In his relation to the clergy as a class, he became attached to the party of Damiani, bishop of Ostia, who was earnestly but ineffectually struggling to stem the torrent of corruption, which threatened to carry away the entire Romish priest-

hood. Hildebrand entered with enthusiasm into the plans and hopes of Damiani, and influenced the mind of Gregory VI., one of three contemporary popes, in favour of a more rigorous church discipline.

The emperor Henry III., however, determined to dethrone the rival pontiffs, and to place one of his own election in the chair of St. Peter ; so that Gregory VI. was compelled to leave Rome, and the year 1046 saw him depart an exile into France. He took with him his friend Hildebrand, who, despairing for a time of carrying his purposes of reformation into execution, became prior in the monastery of Cluni. During the two years he remained there two popes reigned and died ; and in 1048 we find him at Worms, assisting in the election of Bruno, bishop of Toul. Bruno was the very man for the party and schemes of Hildebrand. He was pious and well-meaning, desirous of the purity and elevation of the clergy, and the determined enemy of their simony and marriage. He was a model of every ecclesiastical virtue, ascetic in habits, severe in self-inflicted tortures, and earnest in his love of the Benedictine rule. His desire for the reform of the church amounted almost to a passion, but he lacked the inflexible determination, the iron will, possessed by his humbler friend. He was easily impressed by another mind (at times unfortunately so, as his party learnt a few years later, to their cost) ; and it was under the influence of Hildebrand he undertook the journey to Rome, resolved to accept pontifical honours only from the Roman clergy and people. This was a bold and hazardous step, and

could only have been accomplished by men who covered their real policy by a show of humility, as, at the council in which Clement was elected successor to Gregory VI., Henry had passed a law that the election of the pontiff should rest with himself. The arrival in Rome of Bruno—who took the title of Leo IX.—and his friend was hailed with delight by the people and clergy. It marked an epoch in the history of the papacy, and was an evidence that the reforming party had gained an adherent in the head of the church.

The existence of such a party in the church is the most distinct fact in the ecclesiastical annals of the eleventh century. Viewed as it must be, from one point, as the organised attempt of the church to reform itself—to cut away those props and pillars with which the imperial party were anxious to support it, and above all to confine the election of prelates and ministers to its own members—it presents us with one of the most cheering and instructive sights which history affords; but looked at from another side, it simply takes the form of a powerful and politic struggle for supremacy. Both of these views are unquestionably correct. To the mind of the Italian clergy the desire of raising their order into a dominant and superior class, and of establishing their hierarchy as an independent political power, was undoubtedly present; and it is not difficult to see how the two ideas came to take such hold of them.

The church of the middle ages was essentially a political institution. It was not merely sustained by

the sanction of the various rulers of Europe, but its chief officers were themselves often the virtual rulers of the kingdoms where it was recognised, and they invariably formed a part of the council of state. Not merely so, but in all great national undertakings the authority of the church was universally recognised and respected. Not an expedition could be planned but the blessing of the pope was invoked on its behalf; not a victory of any worth was obtained but the spoils of conquest paid him tithe. His power and influence extended to all the relations of life; the haughtiest and most potent emperor felt it no degradation to seek his advice or hold his stirrup; and the fiercest warrior would sheathe the sword at his bidding. The lowest and the weakest could find a sanctuary in the church that the proudest monarch dared not violate; but no panoply could shield the man, though his equal lived not, whom the church had banned.

But to the Italian clergy there was, in addition to this political character, a feeling of appropriateness in the ascendancy and supremacy of Rome; there was an historical grandeur belonging to it, that elevated it as by right into the highest position among the states of Europe. And along with the records of its past greatness, were associated the feelings of the present. By the tombs of ancient heroes might be seen the graves of modern saints; upon the mounts where the councils of the republic were held, reposed the ashes of martyrs and confessors. In the names of the gates by which consuls entered the city, or the

road by which they left it, might be read the triumphs of the cross. In the temples where once the sacrifices of heathens were offered now arose the incense of Christian priests ; and even in the home of the gods—the Pantheon of an ancient mythology—was beheld the symbol of a milder but enduring faith. To the mind of a mediæval thinker there must have been something imposing and inspiring in the reflection, that all that remained of what was stately, artistic, or venerable in paganism had been appropriated to the service of the new religion ; and such a mind would not be liable to that revulsion of feeling which one educated in a more modern period might experience, as it remembered how often the severity of the conqueror had been softened by the graces of the conquered, or beheld the victors arrayed in the spoils of the vanquished.

Such being the relation of the church to the state, and such being the views entertained of it by the clergy, there must have been something anomalous to the mind of Hildebrand and others, when he considered that this superiority was merely a name, so long as there were laymen who could direct the elections, or control the influences of the chief members of the priesthood. It would only require a powerful combination of families in the governing class, and the authority of the church would be confined to the passing of decrees, or the expulsion of offenders from its communion.

The course necessary to be taken by the reforming party under these circumstances was obvious, and was

diligently pursued by it. Pope Leo and his adherents made vigorous efforts to purify and elevate the clergy, declared that all prelates guilty of simony should be suspended, and ordered that those who were married should put away their wives. The encroachments of the temporal powers were resisted by every means. The life of Leo was, however, but of short duration, and none of his attempted schemes proved successful. From Leo's death until the election of himself as pope, the constant struggle of Hildebrand was to secure such of the clergy for the office of pontiff as were favourable to his views. He succeeded in his purpose, and each of the three popes who followed in quick succession was devoted to the cause of the reformation. He waited patiently, in the hope of effectually curbing the power of the emperor; and in the year 1059 he obtained a law, by which was forbidden the recognition of any one as pope who had not been elected by the chief bishops and priests, with the consent of the Roman clergy and people. The name of the reigning pontiff at that time was Nicholas II.; and it was to his court that Lanfranc, the year before the date just mentioned, had gone to appeal on behalf of the duke of Normandy. Lanfranc was not a stranger at the court of Rome; the fame which had helped to fill the school of Bec had travelled into Italy; and he had, during the reign of two preceding popes, gained "golden opinions" for his eloquent defence of orthodox principles before the councils of Rome and Verceil. Lanfranc had, however, need of all his eloquence and popularity to obtain a successful

termination to his mission, as most of the circumstances which have been specified were opposed to the easy settlement of William's desire. There can be no question that the marriage of the duke of Normandy was a violation of canon law, and that the pope had reason for the anger he felt at the contempt with which William had treated the opposition and remonstrances of his uncle Mauger. If the church were the guardian of morality, and had authority to make laws respecting the marriage of princes, it was bound to see those laws respected, or forfeit its pretensions. And, further, there was the consideration of union which might arise among the different families in Europe, and ultimately destroy the hope of the hierarchy. It was, therefore, always consistently opposed to those close ties between the reigning houses which were occasionally attempted to be made.

William was, however, fortunate in being able to commit his cause to one who, sympathising in the policy of the papacy, and occupying a high position in the church, saw, and could point out, the advantages which would result if some conditions were made by which the marriage could be recognised as legal. Lanfranc knew the duke—was acquainted with his strong and passionate will, and could therefore show how impolitic and useless it would be to irritate such a man. The history of the race in the north of France would aptly illustrate his argument, and aid his persuasion. Not two centuries had elapsed since “Rollo's robber brood” had sailed up the Seine,

devastated the towns upon its banks, and seized even the city of Paris. But the men whom arms could not terrify, yielded to the influence of religion ; and from the day on which they first received the blessing of the archbishop of Rouen, they had shown themselves devoted sons of the church—orthodox, faithful, and obedient. Such servants were too valuable, and too often needed, to be treated with harshness, or to have their wishes lightly refused.

But the Normans had not merely invaded and settled in France ; they had recently obtained possession of an important province in Italy, and had not only been able to maintain themselves against the arms of surrounding states, but had wrung from the pope an acknowledgment of their right. Ever romantic, imaginative, and enterprising, in search after fresh sources of wealth or new fields of pleasure, the Scandinavians had, impelled by this spirit or influenced by religion, undertaken journeys and pilgrimages into Italy. In a few years their numbers had increased to a sufficient extent to render them of service to the soldierless chieftains of the south, and their swords were employed to expel from Sicily the Arabian conquerors of the Greek emperors. The reward they earned by their successful valour they never received ; and thus a pretext for the invasion of the province of Apulia was supplied to them. Leo IX., on becoming pope, beheld them still possessed of their booty, and the people groaning under their oppression. He resolved to drive them out of Italy, and collected a poor Italian army to assist him. The

Normans did homage to the pope, but conquered his troops; and the pontiff, who had just passed a law making it a sin for an ecclesiastic to engage in war, was a prisoner in a martial camp. The inconsistent but repentant prelate made a hasty treaty with his pious foes, and returned to Rome to hide his shame in death. *

Such was the position that the Normans had acquired in a few years in the south of Europe; and none could prophesy what their future might be so well as he who was the friend and counsellor of their most ambitious chief: even the hope of one day wearing an English crown in right of relationship to the weak and imbecile Edward, if it had ever flitted across his mind, Lanfranc had doubtless marked the pleasure it gave, and calculated on the certainty of its realisation. To the pope he urged the importance of such a man as William being the friend and ally of the Romish church, and the necessity there was for conciliation. The arguments and eloquence of Lanfranc prevailed; his entreaties were successful. The pontiff acceded to the request of William, and permitted him to retain his wife. To sustain, however, the honour of the church, and the authority of canon law, it was stipulated as a condition, that the duke should build a monastery at Caen, in Normandy, to be dedicated to St. Stephen, the first martyr; and Matilda, the duchess, should erect a convent for nuns in honour of the Virgin.

These conditions were not heavy enough to be

* Gibbon's Dec. and Fall, chap. 56.

regarded by William as any cause for disagreement. He testified great joy at the conclusion of the negotiations ; he had already vented any ill-feeling he might have nurtured upon his uncle Mauger, whom he had deposed from his archbishopric on the plea of his immoral life ; but it would appear from his own statement that it was rather owing to the opposition which Mauger had displayed towards him.

Lanfranc returned to Normandy to receive the commendations of William, and to be treated with increasing friendship. Henceforth his name is often mentioned as the adviser and attendant of the duke, and as one whose opinion was sought on the affairs of surrounding monasteries. One instance will illustrate the condition of these houses at the time, and show us the state of discipline which existed in some of them. *

A neighbouring convent is governed by an abbot, whose piety is irksome to his monks, who complain that the much study which he imposes upon them is a "weariness of the flesh." Headed by their prior, they rebel, and drive the abbot to seek the assistance of the bishop. Lanfranc of Bec arrives with other commissioners, and they, having celebrated a certain feast, proceed to inquire into the cause of dissension. The spirituality of the abbot is commended, and the prior with his monks admonished to remember their vows, and in all things submit to their superior. The monks are, however, too resolute in their secularism to be admonished into obedience ; and their abbot

* Ord. Vit. vol. ii., p. 406.

seeing no end to the domestic war they wage upon him, quits his charge and goes upon a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Another abbot is chosen, but he falls a victim to the rapacity and cruelty of the nobles whose estates lay around the convent. Again Lanfranc's advice is needed. The duke sends for him and the bishop of Rouen to elect another abbot, and to place him over the monks, independently of their suffrages. Lanfranc does not hesitate to violate the principle of election generally pursued in monastic institutions, but assists William in the inauguration of the prior of a neighbouring convent, while the bishop recommends the "sorrowing monks" to submit, to save their new abbey from the wrath of the imperious duke.*

Such circumstances as these may seem trivial, if looked at in contrast to others of vaster character, involving more important interests, which were transpiring at the same time; but they are valuable, because they help to demonstrate the little value of monastic institutions and practices as aids to moral culture. Envy, pride, and worldly feelings were as active at the monastery of St. Evroult as they would have been had the monks been following the standard of Robert Guiscard in Italy, or pursuing the avocation of merchants at Rouen. But the relation of these circumstances is interesting as being connected with one of the largest and most famous convents of the middle ages. When Lanfranc became prior of Bec, it was not founded; but the spot of ground on which

* Ord. Vit., vol i., bk. iii., ch. v.

it stood had been just given to that abbey. Herluin sent Lanfranc to inspect the property, who found an old church, over whose "mouldering walls" the "mantling ivy had spread," and the place deserted by all, "except two aged monks." A little monastic colony was soon established; and in a few years the original owners of the estate determining to erect a monastery, chose St. Ouche, as it was called, it being a situation favoured by nature with a liberal supply of water, and a large forest fitted for the pasturage of swine, and yielding an abundance of fuel. The monks of Bec relinquished their right to the property, on consideration of receiving another vill called La Roussière. This was the commencement of the famous abbey of St. Evroult, to one of whose monks we are indebted for the most full and authentic accounts of the Norman invasion, and the ecclesiastical history of the middle ages. Lanfranc, who had watched the growth of the abbey from the beginning, did not cease to take an interest in its welfare after he had quitted Normandy; for we find the name of the archbishop of Canterbury as contributor to the amount of "twenty-four pounds English money, and two marks of gold;" and again, "forty pounds sterling" for the erection of the new abbey, tower, and dormitory of St. Evroult.*

About this time Lanfranc grew dissatisfied with the abbey and church of Bec, and represented to Herluin that the house was too small for the accommodation of the monks, the building unworthy of its fame,

* Ord. Vit., vol. i. p. 385.

and the soil upon which it stood too humid for the health of the inhabitants. He proposed that a new one should be erected, upon another spot of ground, and more elegant in its structure. The abbot was too conservative in his tastes and opinions to listen to this advice. In vain Lanfranc pleaded the want of convenience, and quoted from the prophets promises by which the Hebrews had supported themselves in adversity as applicable to the situation and condition of the monastery. Herluin looked with feelings of affection on the old house in which he had passed the last five-and-twenty years of his life. It had been the scene of his early struggles and privations, and these had endeared it to him. The question, however, soon resolved itself; for while they discussed a part of the chapel fell in; and the abbot, either looking upon that as a supernatural argument on Lanfranc's side, or the place having really become too bad, gave permission for the new abbey to be commenced. Accordingly, a spot of ground was chosen more healthy than that on which the existing convent stood, and a new building was undertaken, upon a larger scale, and of a more elegant structure; but the work did not proceed very fast, not being completed till the year 1077.*

Bec had become comparatively affluent since Lanfranc had opened his school; for not only were his lectures a source of wealth, but many of his pupils had become its patrons, and had added to its domains. The services which its prior had rendered the duke of Normandy had also made him one of its most liberal

* Mil. Crisp. cap. iv.

friends. From this time it was known as one of the most important abbeys of the province, and was rebuilt many times. In the thirteenth century it was destroyed by the falling of the great tower ; and in the year 1591 the nave fell in for want of repairs. It was, however, again rebuilt in the seventeenth century ; but at the revolution convents generally fell into decay, and Bec among others became a ruin. A solitary tower rising amid the trees of Brionne is all that remains to remind the traveller, journeying from Rouen to Caen, of the once beautiful and famous abbey of Bec.*

In the year 1063 the priorship and life of Lanfranc at Bec was brought to a close by the partial completion of the new monastery at Caen. No one could of course be more fitted, certainly not more entitled, to be elected abbot of St. Stephen's than he who had been the cause of its foundation and the friend of its founder. Lanfranc, notwithstanding the previous certainty of his appointment, testified great reluctance to leave his school ; and Herluin felt that his abbey would lose its brightest ornament. But the command of William had been laid upon him, and he submitted. After twenty years of monastic discipline, the Lombard student had gained the highest position which the cloister had to offer.†

* Remusat vie de St. Anselme, ch. vi.

† Mr. Wright, in his *Biographia Liter. Brit.*, has, following the statement of Ordericus Vitalis, in book iii., placed the appointment of Lanfranc to Caen in the year 1066, contrary to all other writers, who make it 1063. It is with some hesitation that we have ventured to differ from such an authority as Mr. Wright, and to adhere to the usual date ; but we have done so from the two following considera-

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHAMPION OF ORTHODOXY.

THE most prominent feature in Lanfranc's life at Caen, as abbot of St. Stephen's, was the controversy in which he was engaged with a contemporary ecclesiastic, on the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the "real presence."

We have reserved all mention of that controversy until this time, because, as it occupied many years of Lanfranc's life at Bee, and was continued for several more after his removal from Caen, any accounts of it, supplied only at those points in which Lanfranc personally appeared in the discussion, would have been of too straggling and desultory a nature to have afforded either interest or instruction. We shall

tions:—1st, Ordericus, though more likely to be correct than any other writer on the times of the conquest, is not always so. A very important mistake occurs in the second chapter of his first book, respecting Lanfranc's journey to Rome. He may, therefore, be wrong in his third book. 2nd, he is not consistent. In book v. ch. ii. he says of Anselm, that "he submitted to the monastic rule when he was twenty-seven years old, and continued three years without being preferred to any office. He then succeeded Lanfranc as prior, which rank he held for fifteen years." Now Anselm was born in 1033, or 4, to which, if we add 27, his entrance at Bee will be 1060, and his priorship 1063, which is the date contended for. But again Ordericus says that "he was prior for 15 years, and that on the death of Herluin, in 1078, he became abbot."— $1078 - 15 = 1063$, which again gives the same result.

therefore devote this chapter to a history of the doctrine in dispute, and detail, as far as we are able to ascertain it, the conduct Lanfranc pursued in reference to it.

Contemporary with Lanfranc there was living at the city of Angers, pursuing a life very similar to his own, one whom he had known in earlier years, but whose previous education and mode of life had been totally different. Berengar had been one of the pupils of Fulbert, the theological tutor of Chartres, to whom all writers accord the highest praise ; and during the years he spent under the instructions of that master, he distinguished himself for his knowledge in all branches of science, and especially for the boldness of his views and the extent of his speculation. After the death of his tutor, he retired to his native city (Tours), and became master of the school there ; but he again removed to Angers, of the church of which he was made archdeacon.

As lecturer and teacher his fame does not appear to have been at all second-rate ; for making allowance for the prejudice his contemporary biographers may naturally be supposed to feel against one whom they could not but regard as a heretic, they award him a very large meed of praise. His style of thought and speaking was doubtless in advance of his time, inasmuch as he showed a greater application of the principles of reasoning to those subjects, which were usually decided by an appeal to the works of the fathers, or to the dogmatic assertions of a council.

It appears that one of the first subjects which

engaged Berengar's attention, was the popular notion respecting the Lord's Supper ; and it formed one of the principal topics of his discourses to his numerous pupils. It is said that, envious of the greater popularity of Lanfranc, and vexed at the loss of some students who left him to attend the school of Bec, he was incensed to attack the opinions of the church respecting the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and to place himself in opposition to his early friend. But the statement does not accord with what is known of the previous teachings of Berengar, and the prevailing tone of his mind. He did not begin to publish his opinions, till about the year 1049, but his intimate friends had long known that he contended for a merely spiritual presence ; and one of them in particular wrote him two letters, earnestly entreating him "to restrain that prurient curiosity, which would not be satisfied without explaining and comprehending everything." But there is direct proof in an existing letter of Berengar's to Lanfranc, that the controversy was due to the discovery he made that Lanfranc in his lectures maintained the Paschasian doctrine, and charged John Scotus and others with being heretics. Berengar had generally experienced great opposition from his friends, but seems to have expected that Lanfranc would have given to his opinions a calm and respectful hearing. In this letter he expresses his surprise at the position Lanfranc had chosen to assume respecting this matter, begs him to appoint a day for its consideration and discussion, and especially points out the necessity he

labours under of including in his charge of heresy most of the fathers, if he denies the truth of John Scotus' writings. The fate of this letter is a doubtful part of history ; but upon it depended in a great measure the remainder of Berengar's life, and the estimate to be formed of Lanfranc's conduct in relation to him. The only answer Berengar received to his epistle reached him many months afterwards in the shape of a summons to attend a synod to be held by the pope for the examination of his teachings and writings.

To account for these circumstances Lanfranc states, in his reply to Berengar's accusation of unfair dealing, that the letter that had been addressed to him at Bec arrived at its destination while he was absent on business at Rome—that it was opened by friends of his remaining in Normandy, and by them forwarded to Rome, where it was read by the pope before he received it—and that, finding himself suspected of sharing Berengar's heresy, he was compelled to clear himself before a council held for the purpose. Two most important considerations deserve notice here. First, that Lanfranc does not pretend to say what the nature of the business was which had called him to Rome ; nor does he show how any one could possibly suspect him of leaning towards the spiritual theory from the contents of that letter.

These omissions are sufficient to warrant a doubt respecting Lanfranc's veracity, and more especially as one of his biographers unequivocally says, that he went to Rome on the affairs of one, who taught other-

wise than the church directed. Attempts have been made to prove that this statement respecting his journey to Rome was not true ; but we believe they have been hitherto unsuccessful. At present, so far as we know, the imputation lies upon the fame of Lanfranc, that from motives of personal ambition, or unholy zeal for his opinions, he sacrificed his own honour and the liberty of an early friend. This is remarkable, considering the general boldness and uprightness of his conduct ; but still more so when we remember that, had he brought his influence to co-operate with Berengar, the doctrine in dispute might then have been dispassionately examined, instead of becoming the cause of ecclesiastical prosecutions and clerical excitement.

Up to the year 1050, when the first council was held respecting the opinions of Berengar, the church had nowhere authoritatively pronounced upon the doctrine of transubstantiation, but had left it to the pens of monks and bishops, who had, after the manner of those times, buried their meaning, as Prospero his wand, “full fifty fathom deep.” But before this stage of discussion and literary warfare there must have been a long period wherein the dogma lay an undefined and indefinable impression on the mind of the multitude. It is that period we desire to penetrate—to go back step by step, and notice the influences that stamped it there, the education that deepened it. But we are obliged to pause, for that period is beyond the domain of history. We cannot deal with a religious doctrine as with a

scientific fact. Its connection with other doctrines is not the same as the connection of one fact in science with another. The history of science can really never be lost ; so long as the phenomena of which the science is the exponent remain, so long must its history be known. Bit by bit, men have struck out from nature the laws of its existence ; and the relation which one fact occupies to another suggests the order of their birth. But in the hopes and fears, the yearnings and affections of man's heart, which make the religion of humanity, there is nothing inductive. Of the influences that gave them being, of the circumstances that fostered them, we are generally as ignorant as of the breeze that yesterday fanned the air, or the rain-cloud that refreshed the earth. History can tell us nothing of the world within men ; it records nothing of the thoughts and ideas of the soul until they find an expression in the forms and definitions of logic, and the institutions of social life.

The first distinct utterance of the clergy upon the doctrine of transubstantiation was made by one Paschasius Radbert, towards the middle of the ninth century. The proposition, which he undertook to prove, was enunciated as follows :—"That by virtue of consecration, by a miracle of Almighty power, the substance of the bread and wine became converted into the substance of the body and blood of Christ ; so that beneath the sensible outward emblem of the bread and wine, another substance was still present."*

Radbert was certainly not a positivist. He did not

* Neander's, *Ch. Hist.*, vol. vi., p. 210. Bohn's ed.

understand how things could be regulated by laws which arose from their nature and constitution. He held the opinion, that as there was a personal absolute deity, which presided over the creation of all things, so that same power presided over all the changes that took place in them, and, consequently, that no change, however foreign it might seem to the nature of the thing changed, should be considered "contrary to the course of nature, because the very essence of nature consists in the obedience of all things to the divine laws."

Radbert was abbot of the monastery of Corbie; but one of his monks, at the suggestion of Charles the Bald, undertook to reply to his work—thus indicating that at that time perfect freedom of opinion was permitted on the question. The work of this monk, who was named Ratramnus, approached more nearly to what would now be called the evangelical side of the argument, and was the one which Berengar adopted as the exponent of his own opinions. John Scotus Erigena, of whom mention was made in the letter to Lanfranc, was also an opponent of Radbert; but his was rather the opposition of a metaphysician—if such a term can be applied to a writer of the ninth century—than of a divine.

Whatever the views of Lanfranc had been on this question prior to his journey to Rome, once there, and before the council summoned by Leo, he stood fully committed to the whole argument, and must henceforth be regarded by us as the main support of the Radbert philosophy. Of course Berengar was not present at the council, but he was condemned un-

heard as a heretic ; and shortly afterwards received a summons to appear at the council of Vercelli. It was unfortunate for Berengar that he was not able to attend this synod, owing to the customs of the French church, which allowed such cases to be brought before the pope only as appeals. Berengar would have neglected these ecclesiastical laws, so anxious was he to gain a hearing for his cause ; and even waited on the king, who was patron of his abbey at Tours, for the purpose of obtaining his consent, but was thrown into prison, in conformity with the verdict of the first council. He was therefore obliged to commit his cause to the hands of two proxies, who, however, gained no advantage ; for Berengar was condemned, and the works of Ratramnus and Scotus ordered to be burnt.

Berengar was not long confined in prison, for his powerful friend the bishop of Angers procured his liberation, and he returned to his avocation as a teacher. But the character of Berengar unfitted him to a great extent for the work of a reformer. He had found himself, at the close of the councils of Rome and Vercelli, opposed to a crowd of illiterate clergy, who, totally unacquainted with the writings of either Radbert or his opponents, were nevertheless ardent in their assertion of transubstantiation. So great had been their fury at Vercelli, that Leo was obliged to commit the friends of Berengar to prison to preserve their lives. He, however, continued to urge his opinions and excite the hatred of his opponents, totally reckless of the consequences to himself, and of the damage the cause suffered at his

hands. Many of his friends, who sympathised to a large extent in his ideas, but were more prudent in their discourse, urged him to mildness of manner, and temperance in expression. He yielded, but continued to demand a council in which he might defend his theory and have a fair hearing from the church. It was the policy of the worst class of Berengar's foes to maintain that he was a heretic, condemned but unpunished; and that therefore he could not be heard in his own defence, but that if ever he appeared before a council, it should be for the purpose of receiving punishment. In this they would probably have succeeded, had not Hildebrand arrived at Tours during the year 1054. To him the majority of the clergy complained of the heresy of Berengar. But Hildebrand, more generous than the bishops, at once promised Berengar an impartial enquiry. It is not known whether Lanfranc was at this council; but through the influence of the papal legate the outcry against his opponent was stayed for a short time. Nothing, however, could long repress the horror of those who, accustomed to sustain themselves by a belief in a constant and virtual sacrifice for sin, found their chief support struck from under them. As a final resort Berengar determined to go to Rome, and appeal to the clemency and good sense of the pope, Nicholas II. But he had underrated the strength of his enemies, and overrated the justice of the pope, and probably the protection that Hildebrand could afford him. In a council in which a hundred and thirteen bishops were present, Berengar

found himself and his friends overwhelmed by the opposition of the zealots. There was present one cardinal Humbert, a furious and vulgar man, who determined that he should not have the same chance of escape as had been afforded him at Tours. A written confession of faith was produced, which Berengar was required to sign. He objected; but the alternative of submission or death was presented to him, and he yielded—not only signing the confession, but committing his writings to the flames.

It might be imagined, were we to leave the subject here, that after this avowal on the part of Berengar he retired into private life, and yielded at least tacit assent to the popular belief. Such, however, was not the case. No sooner had he escaped the danger than he lost the fear of death; and, in his correspondence with Lanfranc and others, he again maintained the doctrine of Ratramnus. Naturally enough, Lanfranc charged him with dishonesty and perjury; but he replied by denying that he had ever taken an oath, and “even if I had taken it,” said he, “yet, under the compunctions of repentance, I should not have considered myself bound by it. To take an oath which never ought to have been taken, is to estrange oneself from God; but to retract that which has been wrongfully sworn to, is to return back to God. Peter once swore that he knew not Christ. Had he persevered in that wicked oath he must have ceased to be an apostle. By what just title wouldst thou be a priest and a monk, if thou must always thus refuse pity to human weakness? Thou, priest, coldly passest

by him whom robbers have left half dead ; but God has already provided for me, so that I shall not be left alone.”*

Although Berengar continued to propagate his opinions, both by teaching and writing, after his re-antation at Rome, he was not again attacked for fifteen years, but pursued the life of a successful and popular lecturer. Alexander, during his popedom, had confined himself to advising him to drop any further discussion ; but on the elevation of Hildebrand to the popedom the subject was again brought into dispute, and a synod was held at Poitiers. Nothing resulted from it except a deeper antipathy to Berengar’s opinions ; and Gregory therefore convened a council at Rome, and cited him to appear before it. Here for a length of time he was protected by the kindly sympathy of the pope ; but nothing could save him from the careful and guardedly-expressed language of the confession they now required him to subscribe. Again the clergy demanded that there should be only the alternative of subscription or death ; and “to turn away all suspicion from himself” the pope yielded to the zealots. He ordered that Berengar should prostrate himself on the ground and confess that he had hitherto been in error. Once more he stands for an instant face to face with death. Decide, O Berengar ! whether is it better to purchase safety by shameful perjury, or maintain by suffering the right to doubt ? Poor Berengar hesitates, quibbles, shudders, takes the oath, and by that act com-

* Neander, vol. vi, 238.

mitted many a wise and temperate thinker to the compulsory confession of a doctrine worthy only of paganism.

Henceforth Berengar was silent. He retired to an island near Tours, and spent the remaining portion of his life as a hermit. In these times he is claimed by both those who believe and those who doubt the doctrine which he opposed; but neither will gain much by attaching him to their party. It may be safely said that if he ever conscientiously denied the dogma he died a disbeliever in it, unless some more powerful arguments were used against him than the fear of death could suggest.

This discussion, which extended over so many years, was the cause of Lanfranc's greatest work being published, and is that by which he is best known. Its arguments have been examined by Jeremy Collyer, who pronounces them defective, though he praises the style in which they are written. "His manner of writing was neither figurative nor florid, but plain and proper for dogmatical tracts. His reasonings are commonly close and well arranged. He was thoroughly acquainted with the ancient fathers and the canons of the church; and there were not many in that age who wrote with that exactness or made so good a judgment upon things."*

It is worthy of notice, as showing the horror with which the theologians of that age regarded any attempt to settle their disputes by an appeal to reason, that Lanfranc was directed by one of the synods to

* Vol. ii., p. 57.

neglect dialectics and appeal to the ancient writers. He does so; but the author just named has brought two quotations from Chrysostom and Theodoret which unquestionably settle the controversy, so far as they are concerned, against Lanfranc. The argument to be drawn from these quotations is the stronger as it is unintentional in its author:—

“St. Chrysostom, in his epistle to Cæsarias, disputing about the heresy of Apollinarius, brings an instance by way of illustration from the holy Eucharist: ‘The bread, before consecrated, is called bread; but after it has passed through the force of the solemnity, and been consecrated by the priest, it is then discharged from the name of bread, and dignified by the name of the Lord’s body, though the nature of bread still remains in it.’

“Again, Theodoret says, in his second dialogue between Orthodoxus and Eranistes (an Eutychian—one who believed our Saviour’s human nature was absorbed by the divine), ‘As the symbols of our Saviour’s body and blood are one thing before the invocation of the priest, but after the prayer of consecration has passed upon them they are changed, and become another, so our Lord’s body, after his ascension, is transformed into the divine substance.’ ‘You are caught in your own net,’ says Orthodoxus—who stands for Theodoret;—‘the mysterious symbols do not lose their nature upon consecration, but continue in their former substance.’

“Secondly, Lanfranc proceeds and argues from the absurdity of his adversary’s opinions, that if the

Eucharist was called the flesh of Jesus Christ only because it is the figure of it, it would follow that the sacraments of the Old Testament were preferable to those of the New, because it is a greater mark of excellence to be the type of things future than the figure or representation of things past. To this it may be answered, that the dignity of a type or representation does not consist in the respects of time, but in the advantage of the signification. Now as to the benefits, the sacraments of the Gospel, or new law, are very much preferable to those of the old, there being greater proportions of grace and divine assistance annexed to them; and therefore, though the holy Eucharist represents our Saviour's sufferings as a thing which is past, yet the invaluable blessings, the pardon of sins, and the conveyance of grace are all present, and actually conferred in that holy sacrament.*

In concluding this chapter one reflection forces itself upon our minds,—How prostrate must have been the intellectual life of a people among whom this dogma could not only have been taught but beloved! With the populace the Eucharist was a veritable sacrifice, offered up week after week as an atonement for their sins. There was something which the most ignorant could appreciate, on which the vilest could found hope, in the belief that Christ became incarnate as often as the priest blessed the bread and wine. From the universality of the sacrificial idea in religion, we should infer that it is natural to humanity, when conscious of guilt, to seek

* Collyer's En. History, vol ii., p. 57.

for an object which may stand in its stead—that there is some consolation in the thought that an inferior being may receive the punishment incurred by the violation of law. But looking at those instances in which this idea has most constantly predominated, we should say that its prevalence denotes a low stage of intellectual development, and an utter ignorance of the relation in which the soul stands to God. Now, the Eucharist of the middle ages was rather a reproduction of pagan forms, than a repetition of the solemn death of Christ. The overwhelming necessities of those who undertook to prove that Christ was incarnate in the sacrament, gave rise to legends of a growth so monstrous, that none but an age in which superstition had destroyed religion, and mere feeling had repressed the intellect, could have received them. The question naturally arose, “if the bread really becomes the body of Jesus Christ, how is it that no one has yet perceived the change from the one substance to the other in progress, nor is able to detect it afterwards?” To this it was replied, that there were instances, “where, for the removal of doubts, or to satisfy the earnest longing of individuals, instead of the bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ were presented perceptibly to the sense, but afterwards, at the distribution by the priest, again resumed their previous covering.”* But it was asserted, and believed among the people, that miracles were repeatedly performed, as we learn from the following extract from an English chronicler:—

* Neander, vol. vi., p. 211.

“We indeed believe, that after ecclesiastical benediction, those mysteries are the very body and blood of the Saviour: induced to such an opinion by the authority of the ancient church, and by many miracles recently manifested. Such as that which St. Gregory exhibited at Rome; and such as Paschasius relates to have taken place in Germany; that the priest Plegild visibly touched the form of a boy upon the altar, and that, after kissing him, he partook of him, turned into the similitude of bread, after the custom of the church: which, they relate, Berengar used arrogantly to cavil at, and to say that, ‘it was the treacherous covenant of a scoundrel, to destroy with his teeth him whom he had kissed with his mouth.’ Such, too, is that concerning the Jewish boy, who by chance running playfully into a church, with a Christian of the same age, saw a child torn to pieces on the altar, and severally divided to the people; which when, with childish innocence, he related as truth to his parents, they placed him in a furnace, where the fire was burning and the door closed; whence, after many hours, he was snatched by the Christians, without injury to his person, clothes, or hair; and being asked how he could escape the devouring flames, he replied, ‘that beautiful woman whom I saw sitting in the chair, whose son was divided among the people, always stood at my right hand in the furnace, keeping off the threatening flames and fiery volumes with her garments.’ ”

* Malmsbury, bk. iii., p. 314.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

WHILE Lanfranc was thus quietly occupying himself with the affairs of his convent, or maintaining the orthodoxy of his doctrines against the attacks of Berengar, important political events were transacting—events, in the consequences of which he was destined to participate. In England, the last of those great invasions which form the epochs of our early history had taken place. The Saxons, conquerors of the fairest and largest portion of this island, had in their turn been conquered; and the descendant of the aboriginal Briton felt that his race was avenged as the cry of the newly vanquished floated to the mountains of Wales. In Normandy castles were untenanted, or lonely ladies sighed for the return of their lords, who were reaping the spoils of their victory, or securing the lands allotted by their chief.*

These changes, that had given to William a crown and to the last of the Saxon kings an unknown grave, had been neither unwatched nor unassisted by Lanfranc. Among the aspiring bishops, the worldly

* Ord. Vit., vol ii., p. 20.

abbots, and the unruly warriors who assembled in the stormy conclaves of Bonneville and Rouen, we are not told that he was present; but it was his genius that had, nearly ten years before, prophesied the ascendancy of the Norman race; and it was his intercourse with Rome that had opened the way for negotiations other than ecclesiastical, into which William was now anxious to enter. Had no such adviser as he been in the councils and friendship of the duke, the great expedition of 1066 would either never have been undertaken, or would have been undertaken without the express sanction of the church, and therefore with a greatly diminished chance of success. And to whom can we so safely impute the direction of the policy that William followed as to Lanfranc? Had not those personal differences of the duke's with the clergy been healed by such an agency as his, William would have become either the proud conqueror or the sullen foe of the see of Rome; but being arranged as they were, so that concession was avoided on the one hand, and no galling condition submitted to on the other, he was preserved not only a faithful son of the church, but was assured that his success as a ruler would be assisted by the sanction and the blessing of the pope. It is often said that, prior to the invasion of England, William despatched Lanfranc to Rome to seek the advice and obtain the influence of the church upon his undertaking. This, however, is doubtful, and is probably the result of regarding the invasion itself, instead of the policy that characterized it, as the direct result of his nego-

ciations. There is no contemporary evidence of his having gone to Rome on this business ; while we are distinctly told that the " duke sent Giselbert, arch-deacon of Lisieux, to ask for advice from Pope Alexander on the state of affairs."* Failing a positive statement, this absence of Lanfranc's name is perhaps the strongest evidence we could have that he was not employed in this instance.

The history of the battle of Hastings, and of the civil and military transactions directly attendant upon it, does not belong to this biography ; but it will be necessary to take a rapid glance at the changes William effected in the social and ecclesiastical institutions of this country to understand what follows, and to estimate the services rendered by Lanfranc when he was once more called to take a part in the active duties of political and civil life.

It is generally allowed that for some months following his great victory, the duke of Normandy displayed a laudable wish to economise as much as possible the sufferings of the vanquished people, and to repress, as far as he was able, the rapacity of his followers.† He showed no dislike to Saxon institutions, and gave no encouragement to the wanton destruction of Saxon property. It was clearly not his policy to do so ; the difficulties of his position had not revealed themselves ; the barons and their vassals were as yet too intoxicated with the pride of victory to clamour for a division of the prey. The evident intention of the Conqueror was to reconcile the English to him as their sovereign,

* Ord, Vit., vol. i., p. 463. † Dr. Lingard's History, chap. viii.

and by preserving to them the forms of their ancient liberty, to persuade them they still possessed its substance. No event that happened before the spring of 1067 was of a character likely to destroy the hope of this result in his mind. His march from the coast to London had been interrupted by several surrenders on the part of the English nobility. At Berkhamstead, the archbishops of Canterbury and York, two bishops, several of the principal citizens of London, and even Edgar Atheling, made their submissions to him ; and immediately after his coronation Edwin and Morcar, with many noblemen, waited upon him for the same purpose. All these he received with a kindness of speech that invited confidence, and confirmed them in the possessions of their titles and estates. To all he promised security and freedom, the safety of their property, and the laws of Edward the Confessor.

But the promises of the sagacious king were broken by the followers of the successful soldier ; and the Saxon naturally forecast his future rather from the oppressions of the barons than from the oaths of William. The thane whom age had not permitted to bear arms in the war of patriotism, felt that the English were indeed a conquered people, as he beheld the lands of those who had fallen at Hastings parcelled among the Normans, and heard the warriors who had fought around the standard of Harold declared to be traitors. The farmer who had been left to reap the harvest, which was ripe when the sails of the Norman fluttered in the breeze of the channel, had fled ere his

grain had been stored, and now wandered around his desolate fields, sighing for the days when the Godwins were strong in the land.* The rich traders of London groaned under the yoke they had accepted with such nimble grace, as they saw their shops despoiled to enrich the greedy foreigners, or their articles of value and curiosity sent to adorn the castles of Normandy.

In the month of March, 1067, William departed for Normandy, leaving the kingdom in the care of Odo his brother and Fitzosborne his vassal. The first of these was gifted with a spirit so mean, and an avarice so large, that his government alone would have been sufficient to drive the people to revolt; and the more subordinate chiefs, freed from the restraint imposed upon them by their stern master, improved upon the example of his deputy. To all complaints the justiciaries turned a deaf ear, so that in a few weeks one half of England was ripe for revolt, and wanted only a man fit to be its leader to commence a general attack upon the invaders. Kent and Herefordshire were the first counties where the insurrection broke out, but Devonshire and Cornwall soon showed a disposition to follow. The justiciaries made a show of resistance, and tried to intimidate the people, but sent messages pressing William to return speedily. He saw the necessity for doing so, if England was to be preserved; and, therefore, hastily arranging the affairs of Normandy, he crossed the channel and landed at Winchelsea.

The circumstances in which he now found himself,

* Ord. Vit., bk. iv. passim.

or the despair he felt of being able to reconcile the two races, induced the Conqueror to abandon his policy of clemency. He spent the Christmas festivities at London, retaining apparently as guests, but really as prisoners, the Anglo-Saxon chiefs. He remained a few months maturing his plans and impoverishing the people. He was, however, very careful to persuade the city of London that his intentions were of the most pacific and honourable nature. "Be it known to all," said he, "what is my will. It is, that you should all enjoy your national laws as in the days of King Edward; that every son should inherit from his father, on the demise of his father; and that none of my followers should do you any wrong."* By such promises as these the metropolis was kept in a state of quiet; but the preparations he was making showed his determination to tread out the last sparks of Anglo-Saxon liberty. He probably saw that, although the army of Harold was conquered at Hastings, the land was not destitute of forces sufficient to overcome his followers, and that, under judicious guidance, the English might yet prove victorious. Once more he assembled his forces, summoned his barons with their vassals to attend him, and in the spring of 1068 commenced a campaign which lasted till the spring of 1070. But these two years he swept through the island with the fury of a storm and the remorselessness of a pestilence. Wherever he appeared he carried fire and sword, and when he left, the blackened fields and deserted towns told how ter-

* Thierry, bk. iv.

rible had been his coming. Well might the monk of Malmsbury exclaim, "This was a fatal day to England! a melancholy havoc of our dear country through its change of masters!" Devonshire and the west were the first objects of his resentment; Northumbria felt his last and heaviest stroke. He had been irritated by the rising of the northern counties, and by the assassination of some of his adherents, and he marched thither determined to raze to the ground all the dwellings between York and Durham, to drive out the inhabitants or put them to the sword. He accomplished his purpose. Within a few months a hundred thousand persons had perished by famine or the sword; and a large portion of the land north of the Humber had become a solitary waste.

Having thus subdued the people, and weakened them beyond the possibility of revolt, he turned his attention to the civil and ecclesiastical institutions of the country, determined to place, in all posts of honour and power, men upon whom he could depend. Scarcely had Normandy received the intelligence of the duke's victory, than numerous bodies of monks crossed the channel, and settled themselves in the towns or villages.* "Each fresh levy of armed soldiers was escorted by a new troop of tonsured clergy, who landed on the shores of England to *gaaingner*, as it was then expressed. In 1068 the abbot of St. Riquier, in Ponthieu, embarking for England at the port of Wissant, met with upwards of a hundred monks of all orders, with a crowd of warriors and traders, who

* Thierry's Nor. Con., bk. iv.

were all waiting, like himself, to pass the strait." But besides these, there were many bishops and abbots in Normandy, who had been expecting with impatience from William the fulfilment of his promises or the payment of their claims; for in the excitement that had prevailed while the expedition was fitting out, and supplies were being collected for the invasion, the clergy had shown themselves zealous in the good work of contribution. "Among the quota (of ships) supplied by ecclesiastics, we find Remi, afterwards made bishop of Lincoln, on the list, with the modest contribution of one ship and twenty knights; while Nicholas, abbot of St. Ouen, a cousin-german of the duke's, contributed twenty ships and one hundred knights; and Odo, bishop of Bayeux, the duke's uterine brother, no less than one hundred ships."* Although many ecclesiastical offices were vacant, either through the death or banishment of the churchmen who had filled them, William had not appointed his own countrymen to them. He preferred in this instance, as in many others, to wait for the sanction and assistance of the pope. To solicit these he sent rich presents to Rome, composed of the banner of Harold, "gold vessels and ornaments of the churches, and everything rare and precious that could be found in the shops." Early in 1070 an embassy arrived from Alexander, consisting of Ermenfrid, bishop of Sion, and two cardinals, Peter and John. They remained with the king for a year, and during that time he consulted them on all the ecclesiastical

* Ord. Vit., Bohn. Note by Ed., vol. i., p. 465.

affairs of his kingdom, “distinguishing those districts that needed canonical examination and orders.”* At the feast of Easter, William was again solemnly crowned—this time by the legate of Alexander; and shortly after he proceeded to hold a synod at Winchester, in which the special business of his mission was to be transacted; in other words, all the Anglo-Saxon prelates against whom the slightest charge could be brought were to be deposed, in order to make room for the friends and relations of William. The first prelate who was summoned to appear before the council was Stigand, the archbishop of Canterbury, whose character and attainments would certainly not bear a very severe scrutiny. According to a writer whom we should not suspect of partiality in this instance, Stigand “was a prelate of notorious ambition, who sought after honours too keenly.”† But independent of any charge that could be alleged against his moral character, or to his scholastic attainments—which appear to have been very scanty—he had incurred the displeasure of the pope, for having irregularly possessed himself of the see of Canterbury.‡ The facts of the case are these:—Edward the Confessor had appointed to the metropolitan see a Norman, one Robert de Jumieges, who soon brought upon himself the hatred of the English people, and especially of the powerful family of the Godwins. On the appearance of the earl and his sons in the Thames after the tem-

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii., p. 31. † Wm. Malms. Bohn's ed., p. 221.

‡ Wm. Malms., p. 221—253.

porary exile they had suffered, the Norman favourites of Edward strongly advised that they should not be allowed to re-enter the kingdom; but the earnestness of Stigand, who was at that time bishop of Winchester, prevailed, and the great thane with his sons was invited to court. Immediately the Normans fled, Robert the archbishop, and William bishop of London, attended by armed men, hastened to the coast, and embarking in a small boat, crossed the channel. In the hurry and confusion of flight the archbishop had neglected to take with him the pallium, with which Stigand, who was promoted to his place, forthwith invested himself. Feeling, however, that his position was insecure, unless he gained the sanction of Rome, he wrote to the pope, and begged that his election might be recognised. This the pope refused, on the plea that the archbishopric had not been vacated, and that he had unlawfully seized the pallium. In a short time Leo died, and the papal chair was filled by Benedict, who is usually styled the anti-pope. He, anxious to secure adherents, under any circumstances, cordially replied to the application of Stigand, and consecrated him archbishop of Canterbury. But Benedict himself was soon dethroned, and his successor annulled all the acts of his time. Stigand was then again placed in opposition to the pope; but he refused to vacate the see, which, on the arrival of William, he still occupied. It has been seen that he very early made peace with the Conqueror—even on his march towards London; and, if the estimate formed of his character by the historian already

quoted be correct, he would not have scrupled to sacrifice his country to his own interest by still further concessions. William kept him at his palace, and treated him with marked respect, but did not allow him to officiate at his coronation, choosing instead Aldred of York to perform that ceremony.

The charges brought against Stigand, in the council summoned by the legates of Alexander, were such as arose from the circumstances under which he had obtained the archbishopric, and for having officiated in the pallium of his predecessor. They were found of sufficient weight to condemn him, and he was accordingly deprived of his office and his lands; the latter being divided between William and his brother Odo. Stigand did not fall alone. In the same council, and on various pretexts, the bishops of Norwich, Lincoln, and Chichester were all deprived of their sees, and many abbots of monasteries were deposed. The dethroned ecclesiastics were either exiled, imprisoned, or, if they had previously been monks, sent back to their cells.

This treatment does certainly appear extremely harsh and unjustifiable; for even if the charges brought against the Saxon churchmen were true, there could be no reason for doing more than depose them. The most obvious cause for their deprivation was a political one, though we are not warranted in regarding it as the only one. If it were the case, as several contemporary writers allege, that so unintelligent, and so little imbued with the spirit of their

ministry, were many Saxon prelates, that they saw no guilt in openly selling, for the highest price they could obtain, ecclesiastical and civil offices; * “that the desire after literature and religion had decayed, for several years before the arrival of the Normans; that the clergy, contented with a very slight degree of learning, could scarcely stammer out the words of the sacraments; and a person who understood grammar was an object of wonder and astonishment;”—there was certainly a necessity for the inquiry instituted by the representatives of the pope, or, as they expressed it in the letter by which they convened the council at Winchester—“that we may inform ourselves of the bad things which have sprung up in the vineyard of the Lord, and may plant in it things profitable both for the body and for the soul.” †

It would be a satisfaction to feel that in place of those who were deposed by the bishop of Sion and his councillors at Winchester, men of undoubted worth and intelligence were elected; such, however, was not the case in every instance, although the Conqueror exhibited a laudable desire generally to choose only such as were likely to advance the interests of his kingdom. Remi, of whom mention has before been made, gained the return of his contribution to the war by being made bishop of Dorchester, thus affording an instance of the violence suffered by the English church. Walkelin became bishop of Winchester; and other Normans were promoted to the sees of Durham, Norwich, Chichester, and Salisbury; while

* Wm. Malms., p. 279.

† Ord. Vit., vol. ii., p. 40—42.

at the same time a petition was presented by the bishops and abbots present at the synod to the lord Lanfranc, that he would take upon himself the archbishopric of Canterbury. No one felt so strongly desirous for the preferment of Lanfranc as the king, for none so well knew the weight of his moral influence, and the acuteness of his intellect. We are not therefore surprised to find that "the primacy was committed to Lanfranc, abbot of Caen, by the choice of the king and all his council." *

Lanfranc, however, begged for time to consider the matter, as he trembled to take upon himself the charge of so great a see and at so turbulent a period. He also feared the changeful and tyrannical humours of William, as he probably saw that William desired his presence most that he might be, what he really afterwards became, a check on the haughty and rapacious barons; that he might bring the power of the church to aid the king's schemes for national unity; and that, under such circumstances, he would be in danger of often incurring the anger of his master, and could scarcely hope, under any circumstances, to gain the confidence of the nobility. Besides, he was now an old man, and felt a repugnance to leaving the retirement of the monastery for the active, and, in a measure, political life of an archbishop. Four years before, he had been invited to accept the archbishopric of Rouen, to which he had been elected by the church, but he resolutely refused, and put himself to great trouble to procure the election of John, bishop of

* Ord. Vit: Bohn: vol. ii., p. 39. † Ord. vit., vol. ii., p. 7.

Avranches, even journeying to Rome to obtain a license and bring back the pallium.

His dislike to take upon himself the burden of the English primacy arose, he alleged, from the fact that the people over whom he was called to rule were barbarous, and their language unknown to him. These objections were, however, met by the earnest entreaties of the church and of William. The Queen Matilda, it is said, and her son, also urged him to accept the proffered dignity, and, finally, the abbot Herluin laid his command upon him. Desired thus, by all who were most fitted to judge of his abilities, Lanfranc accepted the office, and in August, 1070, "he mournfully crossed the sea to make his excuses, hoping for a happy return."* As the old man entered the city of Canterbury, his sadness increased upon him, for he beheld the church destroyed by fire, and robbed of its ornaments and service for the altar. †

Lanfranc did not remain in England many days before the ceremony of his consecration was appointed to take place, and on the 29th of August the metropolitan church was opened for the occasion.

The inauguration of the first Norman archbishop was celebrated with remarkable solemnity and pomp. As if to blind the native clergy to the manifest injustice of his appointment, the church of Canterbury was permitted to go through the forms of choosing its head, and its election was ratified by the higher clergy and nobility. To his consecration all the bishops were summoned, and required, if from any cause they

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii., p. 42.

† Thierry, bk. v.

were necessarily absent, to specify the same in writing. Giso, bishop of Wells, and Walter of Hereford, officiated at the ceremony, the archbishopric of York being vacant. Eight other bishops were present, and an immense concourse of abbots, clergy and laymen. "The inhabitants of the whole of England," says the historian, "whether present or absent, were raised to the highest pitch of joy, and would indeed have offered boundless thanks to God if they had known how much good heaven was bestowing on them." * Lanfranc, however, was not so enthusiastic in his praise of this appointment as his chronicler; he could not be persuaded that it was for his advantage or the benefit of the English nation. He still begged the king to allow him to retire to his monastery. To this request of course William was deaf, and the importunity of Lanfranc has only served to bring upon himself the charge of having concealed his ambitious designs beneath the garb of humility. On this point let us hear what says Jeremy Collier.—"To do Lanfranc justice, though he acted with great vigour and constancy in what he undertook, yet ambition cannot be laid to his charge; for soon after his promotion he wrote a letter to pope Alexander II., to desire leave to quit the see and retire to a private life. Amongst other things he tells the pope that, notwithstanding he was strongly solicited by king William, yet he had never accepted the see of Canterbury, had not the bishop of Sitten (Sion), and Hubert, the cardinal legate, laid his holiness' commands upon him. That he endeavoured to excuse

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii., p. 42.

himself upon the score of his insufficiency, and of his being unacquainted with the temper and language of the English; that these excuses being refused, he was perfectly overruled by the authority of the apostolic see; that being thus forced into the archbishopric, he found his strength so disproportioned to his business, and met with so much disturbance from the avarice, obstinacy, and libertinism of the people he had to deal with, that he was quite weary of his life, and was extremely afflicted to see himself reserved to such unfortunate times. Besides, so far as he could conjecture, the mischief was likely to improve and grow more intolerable, and, therefore, he proceeds to entreat his holiness, by all that is sacred and solemn, to send him a discharge, and give him leave to retire to a cloister; and to persuade the pope further to grant his request, he puts him in mind of the services he had formerly done his holiness and his relations; that he did not refresh his memory with these things to upbraid him, but only to procure his own dismissal. He goes on and takes the freedom to say, that in case the pope refused to disentangle him, in prospect of the public service he was likely to do the church, his holiness would be disappointed, and run in great hazard by making himself answerable for the event. "For to speak clearly," says he, "the English are so untractable, that the advantage the province receives by my government is not so great as the disservice I do myself."*

* Jeremy Collier, vol. ii. p. 12.

CHAPTER IX.

THE POPE AND THE ENGLISH PRELATES.

THE answer which Lanfrane received from the pope convinced him that there was no longer to be entertained any hope that he could be freed from his archbishopric. He therefore wrote once more to Rome, but this time to beg that his holiness would be pleased to send him the pallium. To this letter Hildebrand replied by another, in which he took the opportunity of flattering the archbishop, assuring him of the favour in which he was held, and telling him how well his messengers had been received and so on, but excusing the pope from sending the pallium, as it had always been the custom for his predecessors of Canterbury to fetch it from Rome themselves. Hildebrand might have known, and probably did know, that his statement respecting the custom of going to Rome required to be qualified by several exceptions; for, not to mention the first primate, Augustine, to whom the pallium was sent by Gregory,* there were two popes, Boniface and Honorius, who had not required the attendance of the archbishops Justus and Hono-

* Bede, p. 81.

rius ; but even supposing these were remembered, the reason why Hildebrand required the presence of Lanfranc is rendered more evident. His appointment to the see of Canterbury was an epoch in the ecclesiastical history of England ; it was the commencement of a new era ; and it was thus a convenient time for collecting into one bond the scattered threads that united the church of this country to that of Rome. The geographical position of England in relation to Italy was unfavourable to the growth or sustenance of a close ecclesiastical union ; and previous to the Conquest many of its church forms, and probably modes of belief, differed widely from those existing on the continent. If there had been archbishops of Canterbury who had not received directly from the pope the sign of delegated power, there was in the exception only an additional reason why the first Norman primate should show his submission, and admit that to Rome the church of England owed obedience. To Rome therefore Lanfranc determined to go ; and in 1071 he set out, accompanied by Thomas, the new archbishop of York, and Remi, the bishop of Dorchester. *

Arrived at Rome, the prelates of England were received with every distinction and honour ; but this they owed not so much to the fame of their sovereign, or the nobility of their own characters, as to the munificence they displayed and the presents they distributed.† The message of king William, accompanied by profuse gifts which the wealth of England had

* Ang. Sax. Chron., p. 447. † Ord. Vit., bk. iv.

supplied to him, was received with great favour by the people and clergy; and Lanfranc with his companions were admitted to the presence of his holiness, pope Alexander. Their reception by the pontiff was a whimsical compromise between the dignity of his office and his affection for Lanfranc.* He had been a pupil in the gymnasium of Bec, and felt for its teacher all the respect which his genius and character were calculated to inspire; but he could not exhibit his respect without descending from his character as pope. Nevertheless, as Lanfranc entered his presence, he rose from his seat and paid him especial honour, at the same time assuring the spectators that what they saw was not the pontiff greeting an archbishop, but a pupil honouring his teacher. He then presented him with his own pall, that in which he had been in the habit of performing mass, and another Lanfranc received from the altar in the ordinary manner. After the other bishops had received their palls, and the business for which they had gone to Rome had been disposed of, Thomas inquired of the pope whether his province were inferior in rank to that of Canterbury; and he complained that the sees of Worcester and Dorchester, which belonged to him, were regarded by Lanfranc as a part of his diocese. Lanfranc, it would appear, was not prepared for this public demand for investigation in a matter that he probably regarded as settled, and could not help betraying by his countenance the emotion within him, though he refrained from speaking.† The facts of the

* Ang. Sax. Chron., p. 447. † W. Malms., p. 324.

case were briefly gone over; but Alexander refused to decide upon it, referring it to the adjudication of an English council, to be held on the return of the prelates to their own country. If the respect before felt for Lanfranc had at all diminished by this business, it was soon again revived by a scene of great pomp and ceremony, in which he took part. The two prelates, who attended him to Rome, were charged by Alexander with being unfit for their offices—the first for being the son of a priest, the other for having purchased his bishopric. They were required to admit the truth of the accusation by delivering their croziers into the hands of the pope, but upon Lanfranc pleading on their behalf, and showing how necessary they were to William in his work of reformation, the croziers were placed at his disposal, and he returned them to Thomas and Remi. This terminated the proceedings; and Lanfranc left Rome to return to it no more. In after years, as we shall have occasion to see, he had many pressing messages requiring his attendance there, but the visit in 1071 to obtain his pall was the last he made.

The complaint of the archbishop of York, that Lanfranc regarded his see as inferior to that of Canterbury, arose from the fact, that when Thomas went to be consecrated by the primate soon after his election, Lanfranc refused to perform the ceremony, unless he received from him an oath, in sign of subjection. Thomas denied the right of the archbishop to claim such an oath, and testified a determination not to submit to it; whereupon Lanfranc, in great anger,

commanded the bishops, abbots, and others who were present, to unrobe themselves, and Thomas to return to York without being consecrated.* The dispute being afterwards brought before the king, he was convinced by the arguments of Lanfranc that the archbishop of York was bound to make profession with an oath to him of Canterbury; but he decided that in this case the oath should be dispensed with, and that Thomas should, upon delivering a written profession, be consecrated, but without reference to his successors. This was accordingly done, and the matter settled until the visit to Rome again brought it into notice. The council to which it was referred by Alexander was held at Easter 1072, in the city of Winchester.

There were three modes of argument that might be followed, and by which this question of precedence might be settled:—first, to inquire whether, in the original constitution of the English church, the see of Canterbury was superior to that of York; secondly, whether, in the history of the two sees, any instances could be found in which the archbishop of York had sworn canonical obedience to the archbishop of Canterbury; thirdly, to determine if any spiritual or social benefit, any political consistency, could be obtained by the recognition of one head to the whole English church.

The introduction of Christianity among the Saxon population of England took place at the close of the sixth century, and the first Christian church was

* Ang. Sax. Chron., p. 449.

erected in Canterbury. Augustine, who was consecrated by the pope as archbishop, had power given him to elect a bishop for the see of York, who should, as the necessities of the province required, create twelve bishoprics, to be subject to his successors ; but that he, having been chosen by Augustine, should be subject to him. “ But for the future,” said Gregory, in his epistle of instructions, “ let this distinction be between the bishops of the cities of London and York, that he may have the precedence who shall be first ordained. But let them unanimously dispose, by common advice and uniform conduct, whatsoever is to be done for the zeal of Christ But to you, my brethren, shall, by the authority of our God and Lord Jesus Christ, be subject not only those bishops you shall ordain, and those that shall be ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the priests in Britain.” * This would seem to be tolerably clear, considering that portion of the quotation which directs the equality of the bishops to be the general direction, but the superiority of Augustine the exception, made as a tribute to his personal services, and not intended to apply to his successors. Lanfranc, however, contended that, as Kent was subject to Rome, because from her it had received Christianity, so York should be subject to Canterbury, because from her it had accepted the same faith. He also produced a second letter, written by a later pope than Gregory, and which might be regarded as a commentary on the former epistle ; it ran :—“ Boniface to Justus, archbishop of Canterbury :—Far be it from

* Bede, p. 55.

every Christian that anything concerning the city of Canterbury be diminished or changed in present or future times, which was appointed by our predecessor, pope Gregory ; however human circumstances may be changed, but more especially by the authority of St. Peter, the prince of apostles, we command and ordain that the city of Canterbury shall ever hereafter be esteemed the metropolitan see of all Britain ; and we decree and appoint, immutably, that all the provinces of the kingdom of England shall be subject to the metropolitan church of the aforesaid see.” *

In respect to the second consideration, viz., whether there were any instances of archbishops of York having made professions of obedience to those of Canterbury ? Lanfranc was enabled to show that his predecessors had exercised many prerogatives in the province of York, by the consent and acquiescence of the bishops of that diocese, and that Eadulph, a bishop of the eighth century, had made, in very full and comprehensive terms, a profession to Ethelard of Canterbury. But Lanfranc contended that many instances and authentic dates might doubtless have been produced, but that they had been consumed in the fire that four years before had destroyed the church.

There was, however, to put against these ancient and perhaps doubtful authorities, the opinions of men who had lived for many years in connection with ecclesiastical offices and ecclesiastical men, and who had always considered that the “ metropolitan were equal,

* Malms., p. 319.

not only in power, dignity, and offices, but in the number of their suffragans.”* These men had ceased, however, to have any power in the church of England; and those who now ruled her would not have scrupled to violate the most ancient and constitutional of her usages, could any advantage have accrued to the social and political interest of the kingdom therefrom. It is not surprising, therefore, to find Lanfranc showing William the necessity of placing the church, as the nation, under one head, and especially requisite that the archbishop of York should not have the power of crowning kings, lest he might, under some strong influence, lend his aid to a sovereign elected by the revolutionary counties of the north; nor to find William acquiescing in such opinion, and recommending Thomas that it would be a safer and wiser course for him to adopt at once the opinion of his colleague, and consult the peace and union of the kingdom by taking the necessary oaths.†

This brought the dispute to a termination; and, in a second council held at Windsor during the feast of Pentecost, Thomas made his submission to Lanfranc in a document which received the signatures of William the king, and Matilda his queen, of Hubert, the legate of pope Alexander, and the two archbishops, followed by the assent of thirteen bishops and twelve abbots.‡ The submission of Thomas was not confined to his subscription of this writing, but was afterwards shown in several councils which he attended, and several official acts which he performed at the desire of Lan-

* Thierry, bk. iv. † Thierry. ‡ Malms., p. 321.

franc. In the seventh year of Lanfranc's primacy, he wrote to Canterbury to request that two bishops might be sent to assist him at the consecration of a priest who had arrived in York from the Orkneys, that he might be made bishop of those islands. Lanfranc gave his permission, and ordered Walstan, bishop of Worcester, and Peter of Chester, to proceed to York for this purpose. Four years later, Thomas himself was present at a council held in the city of Gloucester, at which he had the consent of Lanfranc to consecrate a bishop of Durham, and was assisted by four English prelates, at the command of the primate, his own suffragans being in the north. *

* Ang. Sax. Chron., p. 447.

CHAPTER X.

THE PRIMATE IN COUNCIL.

THE fears which Lanfranc entertained for his own happiness and quiet on entering upon the duties of his archbishopric, were certainly not unfounded; and any one who looks at the position in which the English church was placed by the Norman conquest must be aware, that he would have been a bold man who dared, in so evil a time, to be honest in the maintenance of his own principles. Wherever his eyes fell they beheld ruin and depredation—a licentious nobility and a depraved people—justice withheld from the oppressed, and impunity sold to the oppressor—the church ruled, for the most part, by men who had shamelessly purchased preferment, and were anxious only to enjoy the profits of their bargains—the lower ecclesiastical offices crowded by an undisciplined and immoral clergy—church property seized by men whose lately obtained estates lay contiguous—church architecture destroyed by ruthless soldiers, and the sacred vessels stolen by a not less ruthless aristocracy. These were evils which Lanfranc must necessarily meet almost alone. The king had done what he consistently

could by appointing a sort of police force to guard public property, but he instituted no inquiries into the means by which many of his nobles had become possessed of their wealth, and did not scruple himself to sell or give the estates of English noblemen to his favourites. Among the higher ranks of the clergy there were none who could honourably come forward to demand restitution of church lands, for many a priestly rascal hid the wedge of gold, that, uncovered, would have shown that there were more Aethans in the Norman than in the Israelitish camp. Out of all the soldiers who followed William to the war, only one could be found who nobly refused to share the spoil and the plunder; and among the clergy of Normandy only one disdained to accept investiture to a benefice from the Conqueror's stained hand, and dared to charge him with homicide and tyranny. "How can that," said Guitmond, "which you have wrung from the people by war and bloodshed be innocently conferred on myself and others, who despise the world, and have voluntarily stripped ourselves of our own substance for Christ's sake? I look upon England as altogether one vast heap of booty, and I am afraid to touch it and its treasures as if it were a burning fire." * Such bold unwelcome truths were not lost upon the king; but they brought only a tardy repentance and a meagre restitution of popular rights. The course which Lanfranc pursued was far more effective, and showed him to be as great a statesman as he was acknowledged to be a priest.

* Ord. Vit., vol ii., p. 54.

We have just seen that the evils which afflicted England arose from the disparity and suffering of the three classes that then constituted the English nation. There were, first, the ignorant and secular habits of the clergy; secondly, the plunder and pillage of the invaders; and lastly, the vices of the native population, and the crimes they perpetrated in return for the evils they were made to endure. With these things Lanfranc determined to deal in a series of synods, the first of which he appointed to meet in the year 1071, and the last of which was held in 1076. Instead of going through these synods in the order of time, we shall group together the canons they passed, referring to each of the circumstances just noted.

Synods had been, previous to the Conquest, of rare occurrence; so that their constitution and order had to be determined before the business for which they were called could be gone into.* Besides this, many, indeed most of the bishops who were summoned to attend, were foreigners, and therefore unused to the English modes of arrangement. Lanfranc found some difficulty in determining the rank of the bishops, and the position they should occupy at the council. At the first sitting, he applies to such of the bishops as were of English birth and education to inform him which was the order as originally appointed. They took some time to consider the question, and afterwards assigned to the archbishop of Canterbury the first plea, York the second, and the bishop of London

* Wm. of Malms., p. 323.

the third, the next to Winchester, the other bishops following in the order of their appointment. *

The synods thus inaugurated proceeded to legislate upon a matter which required the utmost delicacy of treatment, considering the persons who formed the council, and the way they had become possessed of their offices in the church. In all these synods, at most, with one exception, we shall find that Lanfranc very wisely contented himself with passing prospective canons, and did not irritate the minds or excite the opposition of those who would have been deprived of property or office by retrospective acts. Thus, in the first synod, he ordered that henceforth "no one should be ordained by means of simoniacal heresy," and forbade any one "to preside in two bishoprics." Touching plurality, we find no later canons; but upon the evils of simony many laws were passed, and many attempts made to repress them. † In the synod of 1075, it was again ordered that "no one should buy or sell orders, or any ecclesiastical office;" and in the next year an effort was made to grapple with that temporal power which was seeking to reduce the church to a mere feudal institution, subject to the same imposition and fiscal burden as the estates of earls and barons. It was the commencement of that long struggle which, carried on between the last of William's sons and the successor of Lanfranc, was not even concluded when the ambitious Becket fell a victim to the rage of the first Plantagenet. The church had unquestionably received great privileges

* Wm. of Malms., p. 323.


† Johnson's Ecc. Canons, vol. ii,

from William the Conqueror, and the authority of Rome had been fully acknowledged, at least until within ten years of his death; but at the same time no king ever did so much to reduce it below the secular power, and to make it yield a revenue to him in return for what he had bestowed upon it. While Stigand was still the primate, and before the foreign bishops had been appointed, the king took advantage of the weakness of the church, and placed its tenures under the terms of knights' service. The lands were inspected, among others, and the number of soldiers they were to find was set down upon the court roll.* During the reign of Edward they had been perfectly free from all payments to the crown, and this tax was therefore regarded as a great exaction by churchmen, many of whom were banished for refusing to submit; but the evil did not stop there. By the nature of the feudal system, what the king did with the nation, the earl or baron did with the tenants dwelling upon his lands, or situated in his county. The tallage which the king raised upon royal towns, without the consent of his great council, the lords often raised upon their towns, with the consent of the king, obtained for a consideration. And thus when, in 1070, William demanded escuage from his spiritual tenants, inferior lords thought themselves justified by his example in raising money for men and arms from the clergy of their districts. With all his submission to the king, even Lanfranc resisted these encroachments, and passed the canon which orders,

* Roger of Wend. vol. i., p. 338.

“that no clergyman, either in town or country, pay any service for his ecclesiastical benefice but what he paid in the time of Edward.”

Another canon which was passed at the same synod, though remarkable for its brevity, is not less so for the subject to which it refers.* It is as follows:—
“We forbid the supplantation of churches,” the explanation of which the following extract will supply.
“William the Conqueror and his minions endeavoured to strip churches and monasteries of their estates by inquiring into the titles by which they held them. The clergy and monks were destitute of written deeds and charters, whereby to give such evidence of their right as the Normans demanded. In some cases the old English barons conveyed their lands by instruments in writing, yet for the most part by word of mouth, and by delivering a wand or staff, or the like. But for want of charters, they lost a great share of their endowments. This is what the synod here calls a supplantation of churches; and there is reason to think that the third canon (that respecting feudal service), and this, made little impression upon the consciences of the Normans. Ingulph was made abbot of Croyland this very year (1076), and was the king’s great favourite. Though of English extraction, yet he found occasion to forge a set of charters, whereby to secure the lands of his abbey against these harpies;—for the monks made no conscience of supplanting these supplanters, and this was the cause of so many false deeds and charters, as



* Johnson’s Ecc. Canons, vol. ii,

are everywhere to be found in the repositories of the antiquaries.”

✓ Lanfranc, doubtless, also thought his canons would not affect the consciences of the Normans to any great extent—certainly not to the giving up of any estates they had seized—and he therefore set his suffragans an example of the conduct which they should pursue, in order to secure the property of their churches. He found that Odo, the brother of William, bishop of Bayeux, and also earl palatine, had taken possession of several estates belonging to the church of Canterbury, while Stigand was in disgrace, and refused to restore them on the election of Lanfranc. The archbishop determined to bring the matter before the tribunals, and to maintain his right to the lands against Odo, as he had asserted his authority over York against Thomas. At that time the Anglo-Saxon county courts had not fallen into decay, nor had bishops ceased to attend their sittings; they were, next to the king's, the highest courts in the kingdom, and were usually held twice a year. To the inquest of the county of Kent, Lanfranc appealed against the pillage of Odo. The court was held on Pinenden Heath, near Maidstone, and was presided over by Geoffrey, bishop of Coutances, besides whom, “there were present one archbishop, two bishops, the earl of the county, the vice-earl, or sheriff, a great number of the king's barons, besides a still greater multitude of knights and freeholders.”* The case took three days to go into it, at the end of which time the

* Henry, vol. vi., p. 23.

manors were adjudged to belong to Lanfranc's church, and restitution ordered to be made. This was a great victory over a bad man—a victory of which Lanfranc might justly be proud, and one for which Odo never ceased to hate him. ✓

Such were the enactments of the synod with respect to the appointment of bishops to their sees, and the security of the lands of the churches. To stop the plunder of meaner and more numerous depredators, other canons were passed, as we shall presently see. At present we shall confine our attention to those made with reference to the conduct and habits of monks, and others of the clergy.

The number of priests and monks of all orders, who hurried from Normandy to England so soon as the news of the Conquest crossed the channel, were not remarkable for the cultivation and practice of virtue, for the possession of which their class was usually anxious to be distinguished.* Many of them, upon arrival, finding that their modes of life, and the rules by which they were bound, were a hindrance to them in the acquisition of wealth, cast away the cowl and tunic, and applied themselves to secular pursuits. Others, retaining their habits as clergymen, maintained all the state, and supported the followers of temporal lords, surrounded themselves with men-at-arms, and engaged in disputes which they summoned their retainers to assist them in settling by the sword. Many more were guilty of breaking their vows of chastity, and entering the marriage state; some were

* Thierry's Nor. Con., bk. v.

the sons of priests, and others, though priests, were fathers. One of their number was killed by the hand of a woman to whom he intended violence. Others made themselves infamous by their debauches and gluttony. Robert de Limoges, bishop of Lichfield, plundered the monastery of Coventry, took the horses and furniture belonging to the monks who inhabited it, entered the dormitory by force, and broke open their coffers, pulled down their buildings, and used the materials in erecting an episcopal palace for himself, the furniture of which was paid for by melting down the gold and silver ornaments that had decorated the church. Even Lanfranc has not escaped the charge of infidelity to the most irksome of vows. A young man named Paul, whom he appointed to the abbey of St. Albans, is said to have been his son. There is, however, no contemporary evidence to support this statement, and as it is only mentioned by an author who was unfavourable to the Norman invasion, it may be probably regarded as the scandal of the time, embodied in a fiction of later date.

In reference to these circumstances the following canons were passed:—

“That monks who have thrown off their habits be neither admitted into the army, nor any convent of clerks, but be esteemed excommunicate.

“That clergymen live chastely, or desist from office.

“That no canon be allowed to marry, but those who are already married may retain their wives.*

* Johnson's Ecc. Canons, vol. ii.

This last canon shows that the married clerks were a large class at that time ; and that the number of laws which had been passed at various intervals to restrain their marriages had taken but little effect. Canons were a slightly different order of men from monks, though in many of their habits they closely resembled them. Like monks, they were supposed to live under some religious rule, and to observe a particular mode of life ; but unlike monks, they were not confined to houses. Regular canons were closely allied to the members of monastic orders, abstaining from certain kinds of food—at times from all kinds—praying at fixed hours of the day and night, and were collected into orders, such as St. Augustine's and others. On the other hand, the secular canons were persons who, though devoted to the duties of a religious life, were supposed to practise the virtues they professed, by mixing with society, and to assist the bishops by penetrating into those parts of the country where churches were rare. William, and many of those whom he had appointed to the English sees, suspecting the fidelity of the native monks, who dwelt upon the lands attached to the episcopal churches, determined to dispossess them, and to place secular canons in their stead. The king's motive was probably an unmixed political one, but the bishops objected that the monks confined to cloisters were incapable of influencing society, being ignorant of its manners and its wants. The bishops at first attempted to remove the monks from the church at Canterbury, but were opposed by Lanfranc, whose sympathies were all in favour of monastic insti-

tutions. Aided by the king, they still persisted in their endeavours, and one of them is said to have had as many as forty canons ready to bring over. Lanfranc's influence was, however, stronger than that of all the bishops together, and he managed to delay the matter, until a bull from the pope set it at rest.*

The next, and the best known of all Lanfranc's canons, are those collected under the title of "The institution of penance according to the decrees of the Norman prelates." They are the only acts that can be called retrospective, of all that were passed at these synods, and were directed against those who bore arms in the great battle, either by the command of William, or those "who were in arms without his command, and did of right owe him military service." The most important were as follows:—

"Let every one who killed a man in the great battle do penance, one year for every man, according to the number he slew.

"Let the archers who are ignorant of the number slain, do penance three Lents.

"Let all who have run up and down to get victuals, before the king's consecration, and have killed a man, do penance one year; but if, instead of gaining food, the object was plunder, let the penance be increased to three years.

"He who hath killed a man since the consecration of the king do penance for murder.

"If any one has stolen the property of the church, he must return it, either to the same, or any other

* Jer. Collier, vol. ii., chap. xi.

church; but if he refuse to restore it, he must not sell it."

These penances could all be redeemed by endowing and building a church, or by perpetual alms.

It is surprising that so many writers on this period have in the first place supposed that these canons were directed against the English as well as the Norman soldiers, and then objected to them on the ground of their tyrannical character. We do not think they will bear that construction, but we do think they had the most salutary effect. It was impossible to deal with the class of offenders contemplated in these enactments so summarily or so effectually as through the church. In the case of great offenders such as Odo, it was easy to bring them to justice when their pillage was capable of being proved; but it was not so with a host of soldiers, whose time was divided between acts of petty plunder and licentious revelry. There were certainly two great advantages resulting from these canons: first, acts of cruelty towards the conquered Saxons, and the destruction of public property would be repressed more readily by the voice of the church than by the terrors of law; and secondly, by means of the two last canons, which enjoined the return of all stolen articles, and allowed the commutation of the penance by a law, much of the evil that had been perpetrated would be redressed. There was, however, a comparative injustice about these acts, when we consider who determined them, and how largely many of them had profited by the spoils of war.

That these penances were directed against the Saxon population, as well as the Norman, does not appear probable, either from the form of the preamble or the nature of the crimes specified. They are rather the first instance of a Norman extending his protection to the oppressed and ruined English.

One very important measure that was proposed and determined upon at the third synod was, that such of the sees of the bishops as were situated in thinly peopled parts of the country should be removed to more inhabited parts. The positions of the English bishoprics, in the middle of the eleventh century, were very much as they had been appointed by the founders of the church in the seventh: but the population had not remained stationary; it had ebbed and flowed around certain spots before the Conquest; and after the wars and selfishness of the conquerors had destroyed so many parishes, several cathedral churches appeared as solitary as if they had been the remains of a pest region. This was an evil, ecclesiastically and socially considered, and was greatly increased by the fact that the bishops would not live upon their estates, but held baronies and possessions in more profitable situations. One of these, more enterprising and ambitious than the rest, who has already appeared in these pages as the busy little monk of Fescamp, who furnished William with the one ship and twenty knights, was owner of the largest bishopric in England, being the whole of the counties lying between the rivers Humber and Thames. Remi was not satisfied with the seat of his palace; it was

the worst part of the estate, and there were many more eligible and pleasant spots. He fixed upon the north-eastern corner of his see: and, having bought some fields on the top of a hill at the foot of which ran the river Witham, he began to erect a building, half church half fortress, or one which, though having the appearance of a church, might combine its uses with the strength of a castle. In such dread of their flocks did these spiritual shepherds live, that they were obliged to protect themselves from the attacks of the natives by bodies of armed retainers; indeed, one abbot owed his appointment to the convent of Peterborough to the talent he displayed in punishing refractory monks by the swords of his men-at-arms.* The archbishop of York, seeing an episcopal church and palace rising so near to his diocese, claimed the land around Lincoln as his own; but Remi disregarded the remonstrances of Thomas, and hurried forward the building, which, as soon as he had completed, "he furnished with priests of learning and most correct morals."†

It is not easy to determine the number or the nature of the services rendered by Lanfranc to the English people during the years he occupied the see of Canterbury. The fame which attaches to the abolition of the slave trade with Ireland he must share with, and perhaps yield, to Wulstan of Worcester; but it is a matter for just pride that so heinous a crime as the sale of men by their countrymen should have been discontinued through the influence of the

* Thierry, bk. v. † Rog. of Wend., vol. i., p. 351.

church, and that, unaided to a great extent by the state. Lanfranc's part in the work was probably confined to persuading the king to give up the profits that arose from so profitable a trade as that carried on by the merchants and ships of Bristol; while the piety and zeal of Wulstan led him to preach for many years to those engaged in the traffic, until he had convinced them of the evil. *

It is somewhat remarkable that no provision, so far as we are aware, was made by Lanfranc for the education of the people of England, nor that any school similar to the Norman establishments were founded by him; but it may with some probability be attributed to the turbulent condition in which he found the country on his arrival, and to the continual occupation of his time in the affairs of the church and clergy. Besides this, he was an old man when he gained his appointment, and his literary labours were great: for, in addition to his work on the Lord's supper, he wrote an account of the synod of 1075, and collected all the copies of the Old and New Testaments, the text of which he revised. By some this editorial labour is spoken of in the highest terms, and the benefits arising from it are said to have been felt as much by the church of France as of England. Others, however, have not scrupled to attribute to Lanfranc motives far below those springing from the desire for truth. It is needless to point out that it behoves such to show the purpose Lanfranc could have had to answer in the violation of the sacred

* Rog. of Wend., vol. i., p. 360.

writings, since there is nothing unnatural in the supposition that the manuscripts had, by repeated copyings, become corrupt ; nor, indeed, was it contrary to what we know to have been then taking place at many a monastic scriptorium. Certainly, there was no one then living who was so likely to have detected any errors that might have crept into the manuscripts as he who is distinguished as a commentator on the epistles of Paul and the psalms of David. The author of the "Norman Conquest" places so much reliance upon this charge as to consider that it, in connection with the contempt expressed by Lanfranc for the saints and patriotic martyrs of the Saxons, was sufficient to stir up many of the nobles and prelates to a fresh rebellion.

The church of the Anglo-Saxons was remarkable for the number of its saints and the extent of its martyrology ; but its saints were not those which filled the niches of continental churches, nor were its martyrs those whom Rome would have delighted to honour. The conversion of nations to Christendom in the middle ages rarely involved a change of anything but forms. To be able to throw down the statues of heathenism and to set up the crucifix was in most cases the maximum of missionary hope ; and thus the Saxons ceased to worship, but not to love their old gods, when they saw the incense of a new faith rise in their temples. The priest of Rome did little violence to their feelings ; if he destroyed their idols he left their fanes still standing. They imported into their new religion all the feelings cherished by

the old; and the wild hero worship which they addressed to Woden they transferred to the defenders of their country or the teachers of their faith. In the course of time many a spot of ground was rendered sacred by the grave of some saint, or the memory of some brave deed. He who had fallen by the sword of the savage Penda, or perished in resisting the inroads of the Danes, was alike a martyr, and the day of his death became holy. But all this, to the severe and lettered ecclesiastical of Bee, was mere idolatry; he could conceive of no saintship apart from him who had forgotten his country in the solitude of a hermitage; he would grant no apotheosis to the champions of liberty, but sneeringly said, "It would be easy to be a martyr, if, to be constituted such, it were sufficient that a man should be slain by pagans for refusing to pay a ransom." *

With all this the Anglo-Saxon people owed very much to the boldness and humanity of the Norman archbishop. There were few save him who had the inclination, none the courage, to remonstrate with the king upon his cruelties and the sufferings of the people. But he had both; and when William, burning with rage, determined to raze the ancient abbey of St. Alban's to the ground, Lanfranc stepped between him and the object of his wrath, and begged that, for its sacred character, it might be spared. He was successful; and at such times the people could learn how much better their condition was under his

* Thierry, bk. v.

rule than it would have been had Odo been primate, or had some rapacious and warlike abbot filled the see.

* In connection with the charge against Lanfranc, respecting the alteration of the Scriptures, it may be proper to mention the general opinion of the writers of the English church that the doctrine of transubstantiation was introduced as an article of belief during his primacy. The author of the book of the church says, "The prodigious dogma had hardly been heard of in this island before his time:" and other writers are equally strong in their expressions respecting the matter. Their arguments are sustained for the most part by one of the homilies of Ælfrie, who lived at the close of the ninth century, and who evidently showed that he accepted the more moderate doctrine of the monk of Corbie. Dr. Lingard has, however, with his usual acuteness, examined the question in his antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon church. The following are the principal points of the argument:—

"1st. Ælfrie was not the highest authority in the church, therefore his opinions should not be exclusively regarded.

"2nd. His expressions do not agree with the authorized doctrine of the four preceding centuries.

"3rd. It may be proved from the writings of Bede, Alcuin, and others, that they believed in the doctrine.

"4th. In the council held at Rome in 1050, at which Berengar was condemned as a heretic, the Anglo Saxon church was represented by two of its most distinguished prelates, Heriman of Sherbourne and Aldred of Worcester."

These arguments might seem like a settlement of the question in favour of the ancient theory, if it were not for the consideration that England was probably not so far advanced towards a fixed theology as the other nations of Europe, and that, less under the influence of councils, a more liberal spirit of inquiry prevailed and a greater freedom was used in the exercise of the private judgment.

CHAPTER XI.

INCIDENTS OF NORMAN RULE.

SOME time in the year 1074, the king lost his early friend and companion in arms, William Fitzosberne. He was the first in rank and the most trusted of all those bold and enterprising men who accompanied William on his expedition to England. He was the chief adviser of the duke in forming the plan of the Conquest; and when the other barons were unwilling to fall into the scheme, and to undertake so great a risk, he is said to have beguiled them into concession, by a manœuvre less honest than witty. In general, however, he was frank and open in his manners.* He was generous to his soldiers, to whom he gave sums so extravagant, that though his popularity was thereby increased, his treasures were often exhausted. The imprudence which characterised his life was the cause of his death. Engaged in a love affair with the countess of Flanders, he entered her territory at the head of his troops, and, flattered with the reception he received from his partisans, he dismissed all fear of his

* Henry of Huntingdon, p. 208.

enemies ; but they, seizing an opportunity when he was less attended than usual, fell upon him and despatched him, though fighting bravely.

His death was severely felt by the Conqueror, who, when Fitzosberne perished, lost the main support of his government, and became subject to the difficulty and anxieties arising from ruling young and ambitious men, who, not having shared his early difficulties, were envious at his prosperity. The property of the deceased baron was inherited by his son Roger, who thus became earl of Hereford. Emma, the sister of Roger, had been betrothed to Ralph, the earl of Norfolk and Suffolk, who by his father's side was a Breton, on his mother's a Welshman. It is not very clear whether the king approved of this marriage, the statements on the one side being distinct in their assertion that William gave Emma to Ralph, while on the other it is said that he sent over from Normandy expressly to forbid the marriage. From circumstances that afterwards transpired, we should judge the latter to be the correct account. However, whether the king approved or disapproved of the union, the ceremony was arranged for celebration, at Ralph's castle of Norwich, where a splendid banquet was prepared, and to which many bishops, barons, earls, and abbots were invited. Among others who were present was Waltheof the son of Siward, a "tall robust Saxon, brawny in the chest, muscular in the arms." * He was one of the few natives who had been able to retain their estates, without forfeiting the

* Wm. of Malms., p. 289.

affection of their countrymen. He had surrendered himself to William, after the expedition to the north, and had been honoured by the Conqueror with the hand of his niece Judith, and the earldom of three counties.

Ralph the Breton and Roger the Norman had, either through vexation at William or their own ambition, determined to raise a conspiracy among the nobles and dethrone the king ; and the presence of so many influential persons at the banquet emboldened them to discuss their plans and display their grievances. As the feast progressed, they became heated with wine, and having, as the chronicle says, *

Quaffed bride ale,
Source of man's bale,

they rose up to revile the tyranny under which they lived, and to form wild schemes for personal freedom and greatness. Each one remembered all the wrongs he and his race had received from William, and the two earls addressing their guests, recounted his crimes and his conquests. The Saxons were stirred up by the memory of the invasion and their sufferings, the Bretons by the treachery with which he slew their duke Conan, the soldiers by being told how barren were the farms which he had allotted to them : and all were exhorted to arm themselves at once—the absence of the king beyond sea, and the domestic troubles in which he was engaged, rendering the time auspicious for rebellion. Every inducement was held

* Ang. Sax. Chron., p. 454.

out to Waltheof to persuade him to join the conspiracy. "Brave sir," said they, "now is your time for recovering your forfeited honours. Join our party, support it without faltering, and a third part of England shall be yours." But, to their grief and vexation, Waltheof refused to take part in their enterprise—"Never," said he, "was there song so sweet as to charm away the disgrace of treason ;"* but in the excitement that prevailed he bound himself by an oath to maintain inviolate their plans.

The banquet was broken up ; Roger hurried to his estates to assemble his friends and muster his soldiers ; castles were fortified by both the earls, and messengers sent round the kingdom to obtain auxiliaries. Waltheof, however, could not reconcile his conscience to the part he had taken in the conspiracy ; and having communicated it to his wife, he determined, by her advice, to confess the whole transaction to Lanfranc. The archbishop recommended him to set sail for Normandy, and having sought the king, to obtain his pardon. Lanfranc, being by this means informed of the threatened insurrection, wrote to Roger, earl of Hereford, begging him to desist from any schemes of rebellion he might have formed. He told him how great a regard he personally entertained for him, reminded him of the loyalty of his father, and requested him, if he had any cause for complaint, to wait until William's return, who had ordered that any pleas relating to the earl's lands should be referred for his own adjudication. The primate closed the letter by

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii., p. 80, 81.

desiring Roger to name some place for conference on his own and the king's affairs, and to see justice done to the bearer of the letter, who complained that a horse had been stolen from him. It would appear from this that Roger had other causes of quarrel with the king besides his interference in the marriage of his sister Emma. Those pleas respecting his land may have been before the sheriff, when William left England, and probably referred to property left by his father.

The only effect of Lanfranc's letter was to make the rebels push forward their plans with greater rapidity; and in a few days they were in arms, surrounded by their followers. As soon as the report reached the primate he again wrote to the earl, and imploring him, by all that he held sacred, to return to his allegiance and to retract any error into which he might have fallen. But the die was cast, and the stake must be played out. Persuasion failed to influence the feelings of Roger, and the threatened return of the king did not intimidate him. Having assembled his forces, he marched out of Hereford, intending to push towards the east, that he might join his forces to those of Ralph Guader in Norfolk. But when, having marched his troops to Worcester, he attempted to cross the Severn, he found his course stopped by the Viscount of Worcester and Wulstan the bishop, who had summoned their men to oppose his progress. In the meantime Lanfranc had taken measures to check any further advance of Roger by despatching forces under Walter de Lacy to the assistance of Wulstan and the viscount.

In the east of England the king's forces were successfully led by William de Warenne and Richard de Bienfaits, against the army of Ralph de Guader. A battle or skirmish took place on a field near Swaffham, in which Ralph was defeated, and fled in haste to his castle at Norwich. Thither his enemies pursued him; and he, not daring to await the result of a siege, left his castle in the care of his wife, and departed to gain the assistance of Denmark.

Once more Lanfranc wrote to Roger, this time not inviting his confidence, or offering his mediation, but informing him that he and his followers were excommunicated, and that the sentence was proclaimed throughout England. At the same time he wrote to the king in Normandy, telling him of the revolt, but assuring him that his assistance was not needed to quell it. "Be not, however, in haste to cross the sea; for it would be disgraceful to us that you should have to come to assist us in putting to flight a handful of traitors and robbers." *

Three months after the flight of Ralph the king received another letter from his military primate, informing him of the complete defeat of his enemies, and the success of the siege of Norwich. This letter is interesting, as it is supposed to be the earliest specimen which English history can produce of a military despatch. †

"To the most glorious king, William, lord of the English, his faithful Lanfranc offers his loyal service, with these letters.

* Thierry, bk. v.

† Original letters by Sir H. Ellis, vol. .

“Glory to God on high, by whose mercy your kingdom is purged from the filth of these Bretons.

“The castle at Norwich has yielded, and the Bretons who were in it, and possessed land in England, their lives and limbs being spared ; have sworn to depart from your realm within forty days, and to return no more without your leave. Those who, without land, served the traitor Ralph and his allies for hire, obtained with much entreaty the space of one month.

“The bishop, William de Warenne, Robert Malet, and three hundred soldiers, with engines, and many makers of engines of war, hold the castle. All the tumult of war is stilled in England by the pity of God.—May God Almighty bless you.”

On the return of William to England he summoned his rebellious subjects to appear before him. Guader, who was already in Brittany, was not allowed to return from banishment, and Roger of Hereford was cast into prison for the king's pleasure. Too proud to accept the smallest appearance of favour from the king, he never regained his liberty, but spent a life in gloomy contrast to the prosperity of his father. Still more terrible was the lot of Waltheof, the Saxon guest at the wedding breakfast. The story of his fate is the most melancholy of all the Saxon annals, and even in that age of faithlessness and cruelty, stands out prominent with guilt. The brave and once powerful earl was summoned to appear before the great council, and was there accused, on the testimony of his wife, Judith, of having been party to the conspiracy against the life of the king. In reply,

he admitted that he had been made acquainted with the plans of the conspirators, but pleaded the inviolability of his oath, and the fact that when absolved from that by the primate, he had communicated with the king. At the first hearing the council feared to put to death so popular a man; but, unwilling to pronounce him innocent, he was committed to prison, and kept in close custody at Winchester for a year. It was in vain that Lanfranc exerted himself in his behalf, * and that the abbots and bishops who visited him pleaded for him; the intrigues of his wife, who had fixed her worthless affections upon another, and the arguments of those who were greedy to obtain his domains, prevailed. Waltheof was condemned to die. The Normans hastened to execute a sentence so much in accordance with their wishes; and at the dawn of the last morning in May, while the people of Winchester still slept, they hurried the weeping earl to a hill without the city. The executioners, fearing that the townsmen would learn the business on which they were engaged, and might make an attempt to save their countryman, called on him as he lay prostrate with grief,—“Rise, sir, that we may execute our lord’s command.” He begged them to allow him to offer, for the last time, the Lord’s prayer. They gave their consent; but his emotion increased so much, that when he came to the clause “lead us not into temptation,” his tears fell so fast, and his sobbings were so violent, that he was unable to conclude the prayer he had begun.

* Ingulph’s Abbey of Croyland, p. 145.

The executioner could wait no longer, but drawing his sword, he severed the earl's head from his body at a single stroke.

A hole was dug on the hill where the wicked deed was done, and the Normans hoped that, as they covered up the body, so they might conceal all traces of their cruelty; but the news soon spread that Waltheof was dead, and the mournful tidings sunk into the hearts of the oppressed Saxons. Men and women filled the air with their lamentations, but none had the strength for vengeance. Sullenly the people bore this new act of cruelty; and as they waited for the judgments of heaven to fall on their behalf, they marked with secret joy that the faithless Judith ended her life in remorse, unmitigated by sympathy, and that for the remaining thirteen years of William's reign he gained no pitched battle, he conquered no town. *

Waltheof was the last of the Saxon earls; but there still remained one high in office who belonged to the hated race. Wulstan, bishop of Worcester, had passed through many vicissitudes of fortune, and had often been in danger of exile, but, by timely subservience, or such services as those rendered on the banks of the Severn, he had placated the conquerors of his country. But in 1075, or '6, a synod was held, at which Lanfranc presided, and to which Wulstan was summoned to answer the charge of ignorance and unfitness for his office. He was a simple and pious man, but being unacquainted with the French

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii., p. 82—86.

language, was unable to assist in the king's councils. On this account Lanfranc demanded the pastoral staff at the hands of the bishop. Wulstan rose, and approaching the primate, said, "Truly, my lord archbishop, I know that I am not worthy of this high honour, nor sufficient for the discharge of its labours and duties. You claim from me the pastoral staff, which it was not you who gave me; yet, in deference to your judgment, I resign it, though not to you, but rather to St. Edward, by whose authority I received it." Having said this, he rose, and, followed by his attendants, left the assembly to visit the tomb of their beloved king. There he addressed the deceased Edward, telling him how reluctantly he had accepted the office, how unworthy he had shown himself of it, and, striking the staff upon the tomb, exclaimed,— "I therefore resign my pastoral staff, not to those who demand back what they did not give, but to thee who didst give it to me, and resign the charge of those whom thou didst entrust to my care." To the astonishment of the spectators, the staff thus struck upon the stone, remained imbedded as if in clay, and no efforts that were used could take it from its position. The news of the miracle were carried into the synod, and Lanfranc ordered one of his suffragans to fetch the staff, but his attempts to draw it out were fruitless; then the archbishop, accompanied by the king, hastened to the church, where they beheld Wulstan divested of his episcopal robes, sitting among his attendants as a simple monk. They were soon convinced that the sainted king had

invisibly interfered on behalf of the bishop; and beseeching him to forgive their unjust suspicions of his worthiness, begged him to accept investiture at the shrine of the Confessor. *

How much truth there is in this account it is impossible to say; but certainly a very large portion of it is fabulous, and is now only useful as suggesting the mental and moral condition of the people, that could have received such fables as facts.

The next two or three years of Lanfranc's life were occupied in matters that, while they were of the highest importance in his own time, have little of interest to us, who live at the distance of eight centuries. The monastery is not an institution of our age, and therefore we see little that is worthy of notice in the consecration of a new abbey for monks. Nor does Ireland stand to England in the same relation as it did in the time of William the Conqueror, when one of the most memorable of the transactions of Lanfranc's life was that of sending letters to two successive bishops of Dublin, both of whom had been consecrated by him, and one of whom had been a monk trained under his care.

In 1078 Lanfranc returned the visit which he had received from Herluin, the abbot of Bec, soon after his elevation to the primacy; and throwing off the insignia of his office, he became once more the prior of Bec. † He remained among the monks, his old pupils, for three days, and during that time he conse-

* Rog. de Wend., vol. i., p. 371, 372.

† Milo. Crisp. Remusat: Roger of Wend.

erated the new abbey, the foundation of which was owing to his efforts and industry. The dedication took place in the presence of five archbishops, and was attended by crowds of priests and influential laymen. On his departure Herluin accompanied the primate two miles upon his journey; and Lanfranc, bidding farewell to his abbot for the last time, returned to England. Herluin returned to Bec to die. In a few months, he whose early life had been spent amid the profligacy and disorder of camps, but whose later age had been ennobled by a persevering spirit of goodness, gained an answer to his oft-repeated prayer, "Nunc dimittis, Domine, servum tuum." His monks raised a chapel to his memory, and enrolled him in their calendar of saints.

The period at which we have now arrived in the life of Lanfranc, again brings up for notice the connection of the English church and crown with the bishop of Rome. We have already attempted to show that the distinction between the forms and creeds of England and Rome was not very marked,—that in general the church of this country was orthodox in its faith and practices, and that its prelates have always enjoyed a high reputation among their continental brethren. It is evident that the policy of William was a purely selfish one; he had no love to the church as a religious institution; but regarded it merely as a means whereby he might obtain more power, or consolidate what he had already acquired. The position which he occupied in relation to the clergy enabled him to accomplish purposes

which no other king of that age would have dared to have attempted. The bishops had all received their appointments directly from him, and, besides feeling their dependence upon his favour, were too intent upon their own schemes of worldly ambition to be greatly disturbed by the changes taking place in the constitution of their church. The silence of Lanfranc respecting the innovations of William upon the rights of the clergy may be easily accounted for, when we remember that his policy was a conservative one—that he was too anxious to allay the stormy passions of the invaders and invaded, to engage in such a war as was afterwards waged by Anselm and Becket. He must, besides, have been aware that William felt too secure in his new possession to fear any opposition from those who owed all to his favour, and who would, if he were uncrowned, be themselves unmitred. The king, however, did not trust solely to the fears of his clergy; he deceived them by his policy, and blinded them by favours which cost him nothing. It is, perhaps, hardly a matter for surprise, that the men, who had seen the respect which was paid to the bishop of Sion and the Italian cardinals, who had beheld the rich presents and the costly flattery which William had lavished upon their spiritual chief, who saw every day new churches rising around them, built in a style of enduring magnificence, and endowed with sumptuous gifts, should have been careless, or apparently ignorant of the fact, that within ten years their property, and that of ecclesiastical institutions generally, had become mere feudal possessions; that their own liberty

was less than that of their predecessors; that though synods were revived, yet no canon could be passed without the leave of the king; no letter or bull could be received from Rome without the sanction of the crown; and that the power of excommunicating nobles had virtually passed from their hands.

In 1073, Hildebrand obtained the aim of his life, and became, by the death of Alexander, the pope of Rome. He had been one of the principal supporters of William's claim to the crown of England in opposition to Harold, and therefore considered that the gratitude of the king for his success should not be allowed to exhaust itself in the offering of tributes. Gregory VII. was Hildebrand, with purposes that had increased as the hopes of realising them had become stronger, with a view which had enlarged as his position had become higher, and with a determination as fixed as ever on the ultimate supremacy of the church. He therefore sent letters through Hubert, his legate in England, to William and Lanfranc, requiring from the first submission, and from the latter attendance at Rome. Lanfranc replied in a very respectful manner to the pope's letter addressed to himself. He attempted to excuse himself from journeying so far as Rome, pleading that his submission and affection to Gregory were not the less because he was absent from him. He declined offering any opinion on the subject of Hubert's communication to William, as the king would himself reply. Gregory's letter to William consisted in a request

that the tax of Peter's pence, which had not been paid since the Conquest, should be forwarded with as little delay as possible, and of a demand that, in consideration of the eminent services rendered by the church to William in the invasion of England, he should do homage for his crown. The king was somewhat startled and embarrassed by the latter clause of this epistle. And there was certainly cause for his astonishment. Previous to the Conquest, and for many years after, England never showed any groveling submission to the hierarchy. No king had received his sceptre from a pope, nor yielded his crown to a legate. It was reserved for Rome to obtain a solitary triumph over the most worthless sovereign that ever sat upon a throne; and then because the people whom he governed felt, in their contempt for his character, that the degradation was his alone. The reply of the king was brief but decisive. "I will not swear fidelity to thee, for I never promised it; nor did any of my predecessors ever swear fidelity to thine." He apologised for the arrears that had arisen in the tax, and promised to forward a moiety at once, and the remainder he empowered Lanfranc to send at his convenience.*

It has been considered that justice lay on the side of Gregory, and that William, having made himself secure in his possessions, refused to comply with the conditions he had made through the canon of Lisieux. It is, however, impossible to say whether William ever entered into any conditions, and indeed whether

* Collyer's Ecc His., vol. ii.

any were ever offered to him. The truth probably is, that Hildebrand, remembering how anxious William had been to secure the assistance of the church, thought he would offer no opposition to a formal submission. Doubtless also he believed that the tax of Peter's pence, which before the time of Canute had been simply a voluntary contribution of the people, but since his time had been regularly levied upon every inhabitant, was a feudal prestation, and therefore one that entitled him to the rank of superior lord. With the reply of William he was naturally enraged; but being at the time engaged in a quarrel with Henry, the emperor of Germany, he could spare neither anathemas nor arms for any other monarch. He was therefore prudent enough to say no more at that time; but, invoking the vengeance of St. Peter, he awaited a more auspicious season.

This correspondence was followed by another letter in the next year, in which Gregory had several grounds of complaint, but principally that William did not allow his bishops to leave the kingdom without his consent. Hubert was instructed by this letter to invite two bishops out of each province to be present at a synod appointed for the following Easter at Rome. William, who refused compliance with the suggestions of the pope, did not, however, allow these circumstances to disturb the union of England with Rome. Gregory did not recall his legate, nor treat William with less respect; while, on the other side, the spiritual supremacy of Rome was still supported, and the functions of the English church enlarged.

And certainly there never was a time when Gregory VII. more needed the aid of European princes in the support of his authority than in the year 1080. Then, the man who, three years before, had crossed the Alps, covered with the snows of January—who had knelt humbled and crushed before the pope, to receive his tardy and almost bitter absolution, was master of the whole of Germany, and the north of Italy—had left his consecrated rival dead upon the banks of the Elster, and was marching against Rome itself. In the Tyrol, and in Milan, the anti-papal party had elected Guibart pope under the title of Clement III., and had sent legates into the chief European kingdoms to obtain adherents. Cardinal Hugo wrote to Lanfranc, to bring him over to his side; and an embassy waited upon William for the same purpose. William refused an audience, and instructed the primate to discourage the letters of Hugo. Lanfranc accordingly wrote the following reply:—

“I received your letter, but am not pleased with some part of its contents. Your falling hard upon Gregory, calling him Hildebrand, and giving his legate an odd name, is more than I understand; and then your flourishing so much upon Clement’s character, seems going too far on the other hand: for it is written, we are not to pronounce a man happy, or to commend him, as the Vulgate has it, ‘before his death,’ neither are we to detract from our neighbour; the good qualities and merits of men are somewhat mysterious, and lie out of sight at present; neither is

it possible to pronounce with truth upon their future condition. However, I believe the illustrious emperor would not embark in so great an undertaking without being founded upon good reason. Neither do I imagine would he have prospered so far without the signal blessing of God Almighty. I cannot concur with you in your taking a voyage to England, unless the king's leave can first be procured, for as yet our island has not disclaimed Gregory, nor, indeed, declared for either of the competitors; but when the cause shall be thoroughly examined, and the pretences of both sides come upon the board, we shall then be better qualified to come to a resolution in your case." *

But besides this service rendered by William to Gregory in his adversity, the English church obtained an accession of power at this time, which marks the latter part of this king's reign as one of the most eventful periods in our constitutional history. We shall be better able to appreciate the extent of this change in our modes of administering of justice, if we first take a rapid glance at the ancient courts of the Saxons.

Among the Anglo-Saxons there were three courts, in which all causes, either of a civil or ecclesiastical nature, could be determined. The first and lowest was the Hall-mote, so called from its being often held in the hall of the thane who presided. In this court all small and relatively unimportant causes were heard, to relieve the higher tribunals. Next to the

* Collyer, vol. ii.

Hall-mote came the Hundred court, which was supposed to include in its jurisdiction a large part of the county. The magistrate who presided was termed a hundredary, and received one third of all the fines imposed in his court. The meeting of the hundred, or ten tithings, took place once a month, though a special assembly of all the males over twelve years of age was convened once a year. Besides the hundredary, the archdeacon, and sometimes the bishop of the district, presided. Superior to the court of the hundred, was the Shire-mote, or county court. It has been described as a "little parliament, in which a great variety of business, civil, military, and ecclesiastical, was transacted."* Its meetings were of two kinds:—first, the lesser motes, which were held every month, and the general shire mote, which took place in the spring and autumn only. To these latter gatherings all the wealthy and influential men of the county were invited. "At a stated time and place, the bishop of the diocese, the aldermen of the shire, the shiregrieve, laymen, magistrates, thanes, abbots, with all the clergy and landholders of the county, were obliged to be present."† If any of these were prevented from attending by illness, or their business, they were to excuse themselves by writing, or by a deputy. This is shown in an interesting letter of Lanfranc's, written to Odo, while justiciary of the kingdom. The primate was in an ill state of health at the time, and had been advised by the king to repair to Fakenham, where he would be near abbot

* Dr. Henry, vol. vi., p. 339.

† Dr. Henry, vol. vi., p. 348.

Baldwin, of St. Edmonsbury, and might profit by his knowledge of medicine. Lanfranc did so, and as he detained Baldwin from the plea, which he was otherwise bound to attend, he wrote the letter just mentioned to the bishop of Bayeux.

From the decisions of these courts there was an appeal to the parliament of Anglo-Saxon times, or, as it was called, the Witenagemot. This bore the same relation to the counties into which the nation was divided, as the county court bore to the hundreds which composed the shire. Its functions were to a great extent undefined and unlimited; but in relation to the judicature of the country, it had the power of annulling or altering the decisions of the other courts. It could also call before it great criminals, or men who, from their station and wealth, would be able to tamper with inferior tribunals. Its meetings were generally three in number during the year, being held at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide; but sometimes there were special gatherings to consider some national emergency.

Such, then, was the constitution of the Anglo-Saxon courts, or tribunals of justice; let us now examine the changes they underwent from the influence of Norman manners and customs.

The difference which existed between the courts of Norman and Saxon England arose from two sources:—first, from the modification of the feudal system, which took place at the Conquest, and secondly from the extraordinary privileges granted to the church in the last three years of William's life.

Owing to the first cause, the jurisdiction in the lesser courts—such as the hall-motes—became more summary and arbitrary. These were presided over by men who, being the tenants-in-chief of the king, inherited from him the right to dispense justice to those who stood in that relation to them which they bore to the king. All who held baronies of the crown, whether lay or clerical, had this right of judicature, and could even inflict capital punishment upon offenders. Still further, a baron could delegate the power to a lesser baron, or one who held land of him, but without the privilege of inflicting death.*

It will be seen from what has now been said, that it was the custom in England previous to, and some time after the Conquest, to try all causes before one or more of the four courts—no matter whether the causes referred to secular or ecclesiastical affairs. In the year 1085, however, William published an ordinance, by which he separated, with one stroke, all connection between the two classes of judges. “I have thought fit,” said he, “to amend the episcopal laws, which improperly, and in contradiction to the canons, were, until the time of my conquest, in force in this country. I ordain that henceforward no bishop nor archdeacon shall resort to the tribunals of justice to plead episcopal causes, nor henceforth submit to the judgment of secular men suits relating to the government of souls. I will that whosoever shall be summoned for whatever cause by the episcopal judicature, shall repair to the bishop’s house,

* Dr. Henry, vol. vi., p. 348.

or to such other place as the bishop himself shall choose and appoint; that he shall there plead his cause, and render what is right to God and to the bishop,—not according to the laws of the country, but according to the canons and episcopal decrees;—that if any one, through an excess of pride, refused to repair to the bishop's court, he shall receive notice once, twice, or thrice; and if, after three successive notices, he does not appear, he shall be excommunicated, and if need be, the strength and justice of the king, or of the viscount, shall be employed against him." * †

Owing to this ordinance there arose in England an entirely new species of law and of court, and in course of time the once famous shire-mote, deprived of the authority of the bishop, dwindled down to a very unimportant affair. The number of courts that sprang into existence corresponded to those which had previously existed. Thus the archdeacon, who had previously occupied a seat in the hundred-court, now held a court of his own, and the bishop, who formerly presided with the earl of the county, erected his consistory; and above these was the archbishop's court, which received appeals from the consistory, and had authority over the bishops of all the dioceses in the province.

It is somewhat remarkable that a sovereign who had violated the laws in so many ways, and sported so carelessly with the liberties of the church, should have been the author of an ordinance, that tended, more than any enactment of any age, to weaken the

* Thierry, bk. vi.

† Johnson's Eco. Canons: Collyer.

power of the crown. But it is an evidence of the great mastery William possessed over the clergy of his time ; had he held them by a looser rein, he would have felt their intractable spirits, and feared to have given this power. A variety of motives has been conceived why the king should have made this separation—the barons and the clergy having been variously supposed the originators of the plan ; but there is no reason to doubt the preamble of the act, which states the object to have been the amendment of the laws according to the canons. Dr. Lingard, in his account of ecclesiastical courts, says that, from the earliest times, the laity were permitted by the imperial law, and the clergy compelled by the canon law, to accept of the bishop as the judge of civil controversies. He further states that on the continent the spiritual courts were continued after the imperial government had ceased, and that the “ natives preserved many institutions which their conqueror incorporated with their own laws ; but our barbarian ancestors eradicated every prior establishment, and transplanted the manners of the wilds of Germany into the new solitude which they had made. After their conversion, they associated the heads of the clergy with their nobles, and both equally exercised the functions of civil magistrates. It is plain that the bishop was the sole judge of the clergy in criminal cases ; that he alone decided their differences, and that to him appertained the cognizance of certain offences against the rights of the church, and the sanctions of religion ; but as it was his duty to sit with the sheriff in the court of the

county, his ecclesiastical became blended with his secular jurisdiction, and many causes, which in other countries had been reserved to the spiritual judge, were decided in England before a mixed tribunal. This disposition continued in force till the Norman Conquest, when the two jurisdictions were completely separated by the new sovereign; and in every diocese 'courts Christian,' that is, of the bishop and his archdeacons, were established after the model, and with the authority, of similar courts in all other parts of the western church." *

The establishment of the ecclesiastical courts is the last act of which we have to give any account in the life of William I. In the following year he left England for Normandy, and while there, incited by anger at a jest, or from some equally trifling cause, he made war upon Philip of France. Having taken the town of Mantes, he rode through its burning streets. In doing so, his horse started, and threw its rider upon the pommel of the saddle. The king received a bruise from which he never recovered. Inflammation and fever set in, and in a few weeks he lay upon his death-bed. By his side stand his two younger sons, in whose eyes the expectancy of coming wealth restrains the tears for which affection asks. Prelates and barons await his orders, and watch for the moment when they shall hail his second son as king. But Rufus does not stay for their obeisance or his father's death; he receives the letters which the dying king gives him to carry to Lanfranc, hears that

* Dr. Lingard's Hist. Eng., chap. iii.

England is for him, and Normandy for the vagrant Robert, and hurries to the coast, that he may be ready to set sail when the news of death shall reach him. And in that hour the power of the church is visible, and conscience has a voice. The Conqueror remembers the wrongs he has perpetrated, the violence of which he has been guilty. He orders writs to be given to Lanfranc, by which he can obtain restitution of church lands, and he commands those Saxons who still remain in prison to be liberated. And thus on the 9th September, 1087, murmuring the name of the goddess of his church, died William duke of Normandy, king of England. *

* W. Malms.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRIMATE'S LAST ACTS AND DEATH.

AT the time of William's death, Robert, his eldest son, was leading a vagrant and irregular life, supporting himself chiefly by making inroads into the provinces of his neighbours. He had never been a favourite with his father, but had often disagreed and indeed fought with him. It was on this account that he did not inherit the kingdom of England, but received only the duchy of Normandy. Nevertheless, William his brother felt that his crown would be very insecure if Robert should be able to gain partisans on the north of the channel. He therefore made all haste to put himself under the protection of Lanfranc, who had educated him, and introduced him to the honour of knighthood. He delivered his father's letters to the primate, and obtained possession of the royal treasury at Winchester, in which he is said to have found a sum equal to £60,000 of silver, besides gold and jewels, and his plate and wardrobe.* This wealth he distributed according to the late king's bequest, and courted popularity by sending £100 to

* Henry of Hunt. p. 219.

each county, and various sums to the churches and monasteries, to be distributed as alms.* He was crowned by the archbishop of Canterbury on the 27th of September, and passed the winter in tranquillity. But to have secured the friendship and assistance of Lanfranc was to have incurred the hatred and opposition of Odo; and William had soon to contend against a powerful faction, led by that turbulent ecclesiastic.

Odo had, for the three years previous to the death of William, been a prisoner in a Norman fortress; but through the entreaties of his friends and partisans, he had been liberated by his brother on his death-bed. The old animosity which he bore to Lanfranc for having taken from him the manors belonging to Canterbury was now intensified to hatred, as he believed that his imprisonment had been owing to the advice of the primate. "Nor was this assertion false; for when William the elder complained to Lanfranc that he was deserted by his brother, 'Seize and cast him into chains,' said he. 'What,' replied the king, 'he is a clergyman!' Then the archbishop, with playful archness, as Persius says, 'balancing the objection with nice antithesis, rejoined, 'You will not seize the bishop of Bayeux, but confine the earl of Kent.'"

William had soon cause to fear the league which was being formed against him, especially as his cold and severe manners had estranged nearly all the barons in England from him. In this emergency, he

* Roger of Wend. vol i., p. 355. † W. Malms., p. 328.

was supported by the voluntary services of thirty thousand of the Saxon population, who felt that in supporting the standard of William against Normans, they were aiding him to avenge the wrongs they suffered.* The king, in return for these services, promised them the repeal of many taxes, and the enactment of laws in accordance with their wishes. He then took the field at the head of his untried troops, and marched against Odo, whom he found in Kent, ravaging the lands belonging to the archbishop. Upon the approach of the king he shut himself up in Rochester, determined to try the effects of a siege upon the castle, while he awaited reinforcements from duke Robert in Normandy. † These reinforcements, however, never reached Rochester, but were destroyed on the sea shore. Odo, finding no relief come to his aid, gave up the castle. As he passed from under its walls, amid a triumphant flourish of trumpets, the English called upon the king, “Halters, bring halters to hang this traitor bishop!” ‡ but he was allowed to depart the kingdom; and he retired, never to return. Soon after this, the brothers William and Robert patched up their differences by a treaty, which, though not destined to be binding long, allowed an opportunity for the rebellious barons to get back their estates. The promises which the king had made with the English were never kept; the laws respecting game and the odious taxes were as oppressive as before; and many of those Saxons who had been libe-

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii., p. 435. † Mams. and Roger of Wend.

‡ Ord. Vit., vol. ii., p. 436.

rated by the order of his father he again imprisoned. This conduct brought upon him the remonstrances of Lanfrane, but they had little effect. His measures were so oppressive that "England," it is said, "could not take breath under the burdens which he laid upon it." *

In the nineteenth year of his prelacy, eighteen months after the death of William I., and in the eighty-fourth year of his age, died the venerable Lanfrane. His death was a loss to the country, for even the Saxons had learnt to love the man who had so often warded from them the stroke of the oppressor; and to the church it was an irreparable misfortune. No man then living was so well able as he to promote the cause of peace, and to heal the animosities of the royal brothers. After his death we are told that the king showed himself so variable, that the balance hung between vices and virtues, but it soon preponderated on the side of evil, till at last all men rejoiced at his untimely end. †

The character of Lanfrane has been shown in the actions we have recorded of him, and needs neither criticism to expose its weakness, nor eulogium to extol its merits. It is sufficient to say of him, that if he was ambitious, it was the ambition of lofty attainments, and that he never sacrificed to itself the interests of others; that if he was haughty, it was the pride of a man who felt himself superior in nature and in pursuits to the creatures around him, who squandered or dreamed away their lives. In a

* Roger of Wend., vol. i., p. 445. † W. Malms., bk. iv., chap. i.

period of tranquillity and order, when merit usually receives its appreciation, and industry its reward, it would be small praise to say of a public man, that he had kept his hands unstained by bribes, had taken no advantage of his position to benefit himself. But in an age when plunder and rapacity were general, when offices in the church were obtained by purchase, and property in the state amassed by theft—to be able to say of one whose opportunities were great for self-aggrandisement, that in his time no sinister means could profit a bishop, nor could an abbot obtain advancement by purchase, * that though he amassed wealth, yet no voice was raised to denounce its owner, while many blessed his benevolence—is to indicate a character of high moral worth. And all this may be said of Lanfranc.

The property of the church of Canterbury is said to have been very great in his time; and it must have been, if we are to credit the statement, that the primate was in the habit of dispensing in charity five hundred pounds a year—equal to at least seven thousand five hundred pounds of our money; † but, probably, in that is included the expenses of rebuilding the church at Canterbury, which, on his arrival, he found in ruins. The services which Lanfranc rendered to the church and neighbourhood of Canterbury were very great, and obtained for him a well-deserved reputation. The present cathedral of Canterbury, though a very ancient building, was not in existence in the eleventh century. At the time of the Conquest

* Malms., bk. iii.

† Dr. Henry, vol. vi.

there stood a church which had been probably built before the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, and which Augustine, on his arrival, consecrated to the service of Christ, and dignified by his name. In 1067 it was destroyed by fire, and for some time after Lanfranc's appointment it remained in ruins. But he ordered the foundations of the old structure to be dug up, and an entirely new building to be raised, which should surpass the former one both in strength and beauty. Before the arrival of the Normans in this country, nearly all the monasteries and churches were made of wood, which, besides their unsightly appearance, were liable to be destroyed by fire. "All the monasteries of my realm, to the outward sight, are nothing but worm-eaten and rotten timber and boards," said king Edgar in 974.* With the Conquest a new style of architecture was introduced, and more enduring materials were employed. The Normans, who excelled in the erection of splendid monasteries, obtained a great part of their stone from Caen in Normandy, and thither Lanfranc sent to procure materials for his work. The erection of the church occupied seven years of his primacy, but when completed, was probably the most magnificent structure the English had ever seen. From the accounts that are preserved of it, it is difficult to obtain any vivid perception of its beauty as a whole, but we may form some idea from the following description :—The nave was supported by eight pairs of pillars, at the east end of which was an oratory, built in lieu of a chapel

* Somner's Canterbury.

that had formerly been dedicated to the Virgin. The west end was adorned with two stately towers, on the top of which were gilded pinnacles. Between the nave and quire was built a great steeple. Over a partition which separated the tower of this steeple from the nave, was laid a beam, upon the middle of which was erected a great cross, supported by images of the Virgin, St. John, and two cherubim. The pinnacle above was surmounted by a gilded cherub, whence this tower was called Angel steeple. *

Besides the erection of this church, Canterbury is indebted to Lanfranc for two hospices which he built just outside the west-gate of the city; the one called St. Nicholas of Herbaldown, the other St. John's. He endowed them with funds to the amount of seven-score pounds per annum, arising from his manors of Reculver and Bacton. *

Situated on the east side of the city was a monastery, dedicated to the service of the monks of St. Augustine, and bearing the name of their founder. This convent Lanfranc enlarged and beautified; he erected a wall around the court, and built all the offices within the wall. On the north gate of the city he established a priory in honour of St. Gregory, and on most of his estates he built palaces for his own convenience. *

Such, then, was the benevolence and spirit of Lanfranc, as we find displayed in his public capacity. Let us, before closing this account of his life, illustrate one other aspect of his character, viewed in its relation to the monks under his charge.

* Somner's Canterbury.

He seems to have been a man of stern and severe deportment, as we should judge from his unpopularity among the brethren at Bec; and the rules he made for the regulation of monastic institutions, show that he was a strict disciplinarian. But if the following story be true, he was arbitrary and unjust. —The same year in which he placed the crown on the head of William Rufus, he consecrated two bishops, and ordained one Guy, or Wydo, abbot of the monastery of St. Augustine, which, as has been already stated, stood on the outside of Canterbury. The day following, Lanfranc introduced the abbot he had chosen to the monks, but they all refused to accept him, owing to his Norman birth, and the wrongs they had suffered under the previous abbot, who had also been a foreigner.* They complained that their ancient privileges had been taken from them, and maintained that they were amenable only to their own abbot.† Lanfranc ordered all those who opposed his orders to come out one by one, and they having done so, he led in the abbot, and installed him with all due ceremonies. The prior he ordered to be confined in the cloister, and others he committed to prison. Still the refractory monks did not return to their obedience, but assembled around St. Mildred's church, or sat under the walls of the castle. The archbishop sent to them, and threatened them that if they did not submit to the government of their abbot, and show their submission by returning to their monastery within a few hours, he should treat them

* Ang. Sax. Chron.: Notes, Bohn. † Thierry's, Nor. Con.

as vagabonds. Hunger compelled a few of them to capitulate; but they were not permitted to return to their duties, or to partake of their food, until they had sworn, upon the relics of St. Augustine, to obey their superior. The rest, remaining obstinate, were put in irons and confined in the archbishop's palace. These severe measures prevented any further outward expression of hostility to the foreign abbot; but a conspiracy was privately formed to put him to death. By some means this plot was discovered, and one of the conspirators was seized. Being brought before Lanfranc, he was questioned, and confessed that had opportunity been favourable he would certainly have killed the abbot. The primate thereupon sentenced him to be publicly disgraced, by having his cowl torn off, and after having been tied naked to the gate of his monastery, to be flogged.

This was the end of the disturbance, and so long as Lanfranc lived, its recurrence was prevented by fear: but no sooner was he dead than the abbot was compelled to flee; for the townsmen, stirred up by the monks, attacked his house and threatened his life. His dependents defended themselves, and were at last supported by a detachment of troops sent down to Canterbury by the king. Two neighbouring bishops brought the monks to trial, sentenced them to the punishment of the scourge, and afterwards to be distributed in different monasteries.

The injustice of which the primate was guilty in this transaction was rather in the cause he had given the monks for resistance, than in the manner in

* which he subdued it when excited. He manifestly outraged the popular sense of right, by taking away one of the most ancient privileges of the monastery; and the readiness with which the people of the city sympathized with the ecclesiastics shows that they regarded the introduction of the foreign abbot as only a part of the political tyranny under which they groaned. The treatment of the recusants was indeed severe; but it was in accordance with the spirit of their rules, and, so far as the worst of them were concerned, it was richly deserved. Looked at from the religious point of view, we must certainly feel that some writers have expended too much sympathy upon men who, though they were native monks, were very bad Christians. A Norman adventurer could have been hardly less fit for the office of abbot, than were they for that of ministers to the people. But admitting that in this instance Lanfranc was guilty of infringing the liberties of the English church, and of acting with injustice towards the monks, we can still prove that, considered generally, the monastic institutions of this country owed much to his care. He reformed their orders, and increased their numbers; he protected them from the avarice of foreigners, and saved their most ancient abbey from the destructive wrath of the king; he incited them to the pursuit of knowledge, and encouraged them by his example; he edited their sacred literature, and gave them a uniform liturgy; he re-established many monasteries which had fallen into decay, and built others in a style totally unknown

in England before. For these things he was beloved by many; and an historian of the following century, speaking of the monks of his own time, says, "Their minds are still formed on the model of Lanfranc; his memory is dear to them: a warm devotion to God, to strangers a pleasing affability, still remain; nor shall ages see extinguished what in him was a benevolence of heart, comprising the human race, and felt by each one that approached him."



LIFE OF ANSELM.



LIFE OF ANSELM.

CHAPTER I.

AOUST AND AVRANCHES.

THE successor of Lanfranc to the see of Canterbury was Anselm ; many of the circumstances of whose life, and the character of whose mind, bore a striking similarity to those of his predecessor and master. Like Lanfranc, he was by birth an Italian, and descended from a respectable family ; like him, too, he was in early life a student of no mean pretensions : for the love of knowledge he left his native country, and travelling into France followed closely the steps that Lanfranc had previously trodden, until he became a monk, and finally the abbot of the monastery of Bec. Very little is known respecting his family or early life, and what is generally related of him partakes more largely than could be desired of the marvellous and legendary. It is supposed that he was born in the year 1033 or 1034, and in the

city of Aoust; which, in its name and its architectural remains, shows the relation it once bore to the empire of Augustus. He was the only son of parents who do not appear to have been especially adapted for each other; his father being boisterous, selfish, and passionate, while his mother was mild, retiring, and religious.

It was her especial delight to train him and his only sister in the love and practice of the religion for which she was so eminent; she doubtless early detected the germ of that devotional spirit which afterwards made him famous as a monk, and ultimately honoured as a saint. She strove hard, and it would appear not unsuccessfully, to develop it; and circumstances assisted her. Gondulf, his father, was morose and forbidding; he spent his life in the neglect of home, and the indulgence of self. This left the mother the full control and education of her children, and in the prosecution of her work she employed all the innocent artifices that her affection could suggest, or her knowledge dictate. The boy listened to her instructions so reverently that he would seem to have occasionally taken literally what she intended as a figure. She often illustrated her lesson by the scenery of his native valley, and told him that the mountains which shut in the home of his childhood were the pillars upon which rested the heaven of her hopes. His friend and biographer, Eadmer, has given us an anecdote which shows the effect such teaching had upon him. He dreamt that the hills about him were the stairs by which he could

climb to God; that upon their summits he should find all that his mother taught him to love and that she desired for him. He essayed to climb, and was successful; upon the fields around, he saw the servants of the King, and chid them because he thought them idling in their labour; he penetrated into the palace itself, spoke to its King, and was refreshed with heavenly food.

It would have been a matter for surprise to us, and certainly of disappointment to his mother, had so much sentiment and feeling been allowed to evaporate outside the walls of a monastery. Chivalry had not then arisen to employ at once the devotion of the religious, and the courage of the daring adventurers,—literature was unknown as a profession, and hardly practised as an art, except by a few in the cloister. In the eleventh century the monastery alone offered a school for the studious, and seclusion for the retiring. To that Anselm, as early as fifteen years of age, turned and sought admission. The application was refused, owing to the opposition of his father and his own youth; but the refusal sunk deep into the heart of the applicant, who went home to mourn over his disappointment, and to pray that a serious illness would fall upon him, which would thaw the resolve of his father and give him some claim to the sympathy of the abbot. The illness came; but the father would not consent. This second disappointment was more than Anselm could bear. Throwing away his books, his studies and his hopes, he neglected the companionship of

his mother and sister, and sought to forget his grief in selfish and dissolute pleasures. Suddenly his mother died. The effect upon Anselm is not recorded; but upon Gondulf it was serious and permanent. The positions of the father and son singularly changed. Gondulf entered a monastery, and now looked with a stern eye upon vices so lately his own, but which now disgraced his son. The anomaly, however, did not long exist. For some reasons not clearly known, but most probably the return of his natural tastes and former hopes, and also to the influence of one who might be called a family chaplain, Anselm set out from Aoust, in company with his friend, determined to penetrate across the range of mountains which divides France from Italy. He accomplished his purpose, though not without hardship and danger. In crossing Mount Cenis they were overcome with fatigue, and so exhausted for want of food, that they supported themselves by melting snow in their mouths. By accident they discovered in the sack carried by an attendant ass a loaf which they had previously overlooked, and which revived their hopes and their strength. Anselm regarded it as a miraculous preservation, and connected it in some mysterious way with the bread of his boyish dream.

We are not told how the next three years were passed, we only know the fact that they were spent partly in Burgundy and partly in France. At the end of that time we hear of his going into Normandy, and of his being at Avranches, where he probably

heard of Lanfranc, the then famous teacher of Bec. Thither he travelled, and was immediately introduced into the school of the Lombard. His love of learning and capacity for teaching were soon discovered by Lanfranc, who employed him as his assistant, and remarked with pleasure upon the long nights of study and devotion passed by his new pupil. The circumstances in which he was now placed, and the example of Lanfranc acting upon a mind already inclined towards the cell, once more awoke in Anselm the desire of becoming a monk. He applied to his friend and teacher for his advice. The responsibility was not accepted; but Lanfranc proposed that they should wait upon the archbishop of Rouen, his nearest friend and spiritual adviser. They did so. The conference gave to Bec another distinguished scholar, and to the church a son who was destined to fill in a few years one of its highest posts.

CHAPTER II.

CLOISTER LIFE.

ANSELM did not remain long at Bec in the humble position of an ordinary monk ; opportunity soon occurred for his promotion to the office held by his friend Lanfranc, who was then at the top of his popularity as a teacher, in the highest esteem with the church for the triumphs he had achieved on the side of orthodoxy, and greatly in favour with the duke for the services he had rendered him at Rome. The price demanded from William for liberty to violate canonical rules had been partly paid, and the abbey was in course of erection which was to do honour to St. Stephen, and vindicate the authority of the church. After three years of Anselm's cloister life had elapsed, the new monastery was fit for habitation, and Lanfranc received the call to its government. Some of his monks and pupils accompanied him to Caen, but Anselm was not of the number ; at the desire and through the influence of his friend and master, he was elected to the vacant office of prior, and at the same time promoted to the chair of the teacher. He was only thirty years of age, when this double honour was conferred

upon him; and this fact, conjointly with the short time he had been an inmate of the monastery, was the cause of much disaffection among the brethren. Little opposition parties were formed against him, and, headed by a young, mischievous monk named Osbern, they carried on a system of annoyance and irritation.

Anselm saw all this without apparent concern. He was prudent enough to repress his resentment, and determined to conquer his enemy by "heaping coals of fire on his head," in the shape of warm and glowing kindnesses. By a course of constant but dignified attentions, he succeeded in gaining enough of the respect of Osbern to overcome his enmity, and by degrees obtained his esteem, and finally his confidence and affection. Osbern, who really possessed some good qualities, became Anselm's favourite monk and pupil. He felt for him a real affection, and began to look forward to the time when the youth should be called to fill a higher position in the house. His hopes, however, were vain. Mortal disease laid its hand upon the favourite. It is pleasant to observe, through the veil of superstitious but not unreliable legend, with what tenderness the prior watched the sick monk;—what loving and supporting words he spoke to him,—how gently he performed the offices of physician and nurse,—and what affectionate reliance he inspires. But in spite of all, Osbern dies; and Anselm consoles himself with the promise of his friend to transmit to him a knowledge of his then unknown destiny. While

the monks surrounded the body of their dead brother, and chanted the service of the church, Anselm saw a vision, which he interpreted, according to his wishes, as the intelligence of his friend's safety.

This is one of many circumstances which constitute striking dissimilarity between the recorded life of Lanfranc and that of Anselm. In the biography of the former we were seldom brought into contact with the supernatural agencies of the middle ages. Here and there a vision appeared. A ghostly boy, for example, was seen in company with Herluin, and by spiritual intervention it was determined that the abbey of Bec should be rebuilt. But these were exceptions; as a rule, the natural order of things was observed. But such is not the rule in the life of Anselm. Its every page bears traces of belief in active supernatural power. Every dream of a disturbed mind is a vision,—every act of kindness a prodigy. From the time of Osbern's death, Anselm rose higher and higher in the esteem of his monks, and their former animosity was turned into unbounded admiration. He was elevated into a seer, a prophet, and a worker of miracles. Maniacs were restored to reason by his presence. A dying man beheld a flame of fire issue from his mouth. His secretary saw him surrounded, when engaged in his nocturnal meditations, by a halo of light. Returning from a visit to a Norman lord, he fell into conversation with a monk, of whom he asked a night's lodging. The monk promised to provide him with shelter, but apologetically informed him

he must expect but meagre fare. The confident smile with which Anselm begs him not to make himself uneasy on that score, suggests the possible resemblance of the monk's larder to that of the clerk of Copmanhurst, of whom the Black Knight demanded a supper. Such, however, is not the case; the virtue of the monk is sustained, and a supper is provided by the miraculous power of Anselm. It would perhaps be difficult to say whether this difference in the lives of these two men is to be accounted for by the superior acquaintance of Lanfranc with the laws of nature,—or by the circumstance that, whereas we are chiefly indebted to the ordinary chroniclers for the facts of Lanfranc's life, that of his disciple and successor was written by one who was constantly near him, and whose deep reverence may have led to a belief that Anselm was possessed of attributes superior to his fellows. The latter is probably the case,—for it is hard to believe that the virtue of either of these philosophers was so much greater than their science, that they could refuse the homage of superstition.

In the autumn of the year 1078, the abbot Herluin died, and the brethren were called to elect another leader in his place. In the election of this dignitary all the monks had the right of franchise, and they used it unanimously in favour of Anselm. He showed a great reluctance to accept this honour. He even fell upon his knees, and conjured the congregation to spare him from so heavy a responsibility; while they in their turn

prostrated themselves, and begged him to acquiesce. After this serious comedy had been repeated several times, a deputy was sent to obtain the approval of William, the king of England, who happened to be at the time in Normandy. He, finding that it was really the desire of the convent Anselm should be made abbot, gave his sanction. Anselm assented,—and at the beginning of the year 1079 was consecrated to that high office, “in the abbey church at Bec by the Lord Gislebert, bishop of Evreux, on the festival called ‘the chair of St. Peter.’”*

The life of Anselm at Bec did not differ very materially from that of his predecessor,—except that the convulsions in Normandy and the kingdom on the other side of the channel required him to pay greater attention to the affairs of his monastery. His disposition was extremely meditative and religious. He loved to spend nights in the contemplation of mysteries, the meaning of which the wisest rarely extract. His piety was eminently *moyen age* in its character,—sombre, penitential, grotesque, and yet at times sublime in its expression. Severe as a prior and abbot, he seemed to feel both for himself and his monks that heaven was only to be reached by forced marches. He insisted that daily privations and mortifications were the especial glory of a monk. The inmates of Bec were, besides, often robbed of their simple fare to supply the necessities of strangers. Many years had passed

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii. p. 117. Bohn.

since the little brotherhood had been obliged to submit to the rigours of a limited dietary. With the increase of Lanfranc's pupils, the wealth of the abbey and the number of monks had been greatly augmented; but during the administration of Anselm, owing probably to a failure in their crops, and certainly to the expenses incurred in making and putting up a new bell, the convent table was supplied with only beans and peas. A letter of the abbot remains, in which he thanks Lanfranc for the gift of twenty pounds sent by the archbishop to assist them in their temporary difficulties.

The literary employments of Anselm during his life at Bec partook of his devotional character. He did not, as his predecessor had done, take much part in the controversies that were raging about him. No one who looked upon that mild and scholarly man, could have supposed that in a few years he was to be the forlorn hope of the ecclesiastical veterans who waged so terrible a war with the civil power. At the time of his elevation to the office of abbot, he was engaged upon several learned works, which we shall have subsequent occasion to notice. Four of these obtained great popularity. They were devoted to theological and scientific subjects, and were written in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and his pupils. The most important of his compositions were submitted to the criticism of Lanfranc, to whom he subscribed himself a son by affection, a disciple by doctrine. Partly to converse with Lanfranc

respecting his studies, and partly on affairs of his convent, he determined in 1079 to leave Normandy on a visit to England.

On arriving at Canterbury, he was received with great honour by the clergy of that city, with many of whom he was personally acquainted, to all of whom he must have been well known, as several of them had been monks of Bec. One of his pupils was prior, another præcentor, of St. Augustine's. He visited all the churches, and convents of monks and of canons, during his stay in England; and made himself extremely popular among the clergy by his sermons on ^{the} feast days, and his discourses at all times on subjects sacred or profane. He was entertained by the king at court with marked respect, and even the courtiers vied with each other in showing him honour. In his conversations with the primate he combated those politic views which Lanfranc had taken of the conquest of England, and remonstrated with him against that dethronement of national heroes and saints which was then going forward.

In the spring of 1080 Anselm returned to Bec, having obtained from the king a confirmation of the charter of his abbey, and having made for himself a great number of friends, influential in the church by their position, or in the state by their wealth, and who were afterwards the cause of his succeeding to the high office of his friend and master.

CHAPTER III.

NOLO EPISCOPARI.

AT the time of Anselm's second visit to England (1092), the second William had been king about five years; and had therefore had sufficient time to manifest his disposition towards the different sections of his subjects, and to develop all his qualities. He had not succeeded in impressing the nation very favourably; many who had been friendly to his accession had been driven into hostility by his vices and follies; and those who had questioned his claim to the crown had become confirmed in their disaffection. But he had neither the wisdom to conciliate, nor the strength to intimidate his enemies. Unlike his father, he enjoyed no respect; the hatred which men felt for him was not that natural reward of triumphant tyranny which all successful usurpers receive; but scornful contempt for a mean and vulgar despot, who abused the power he had not seized, and insulted those over whom chance, not valour, had made him lord. In every relation of life his acts were unjust, his conduct untruthful. His brother, his people, the church, alike found him unnatural, oppressive, and dishonest.

We have seen that while Lanfranc lived, his influence over the royal mind, and the respect his opinions commanded from all men, were sufficient to preserve the church from acts of flagrant rapacity, either on the part of the king or his barons; although even Lanfranc was powerless when he attempted to shield the people from double oppression. But this restraint, weak as it latterly became, altogether ceased in the year 1089, when the primate died; leaving a people and clergy who had often found him a severe master, to regret the loss of his dignified intercession, or haughty remonstrance on their behalf.

The immense revenues left by the conqueror at his death were soon squandered by Rufus,—partly in his expedition to Normandy, and partly by his dissipated and luxurious habits. To replenish the exchequer, William had recourse to various schemes, all more or less unjust; and as his avarice and requirements increased, his oppressive measures kept pace with them. Like most bad kings, he was hurried forward in his career of selfish wickedness, and assisted in his tyrannical practices by a worthless favourite. Ralph Flambard, aided by a handsome exterior, a love of social pleasures, and a wit that enlivened them, had risen from the lower ranks of the clergy to the office of king's chaplain. He earned in his own day an odious notoriety by the skill with which he planned, and the zeal with which he applied himself to the execution of any abominable scheme which was likely either to enrich

the king's treasury or promote his own interests. The writers of his own and later times have left a full and unanimous testimony to his having been a "most cruel extortioner, the most avaricious and most abandoned of all men in the land."* "He was the son of one Thurstan, an obscure priest of the diocese of Bayeux, and, having been brought up from his earliest years among the vile parasites of the court, was better skilled in crafty intrigues and verbal subtleties, than in sound learning. Inflated with ambition to raise himself above the eminent men who adorned the court of the great king William, he undertook many things without orders, and of which that prince was ignorant, making impertinent and vexatious accusations in the king's court, and arrogantly overawing his superiors as if he was supported by the royal authority. In consequence, Robert, the king's steward, gave him the surname of Flambard, which, indeed, prophetically suited his genius and conduct; for like a devouring flame he tormented the people, and turned the daily chants of the church into lamentations, by the new practices he introduced into the country."†

Each class in the state had reason to curse the name of Ralph, and to desire his expulsion from the country; for each felt the weight of his exactions, and upon every one he made war. The Saxon population regarded him as the chief cause of the increased penalties attached to the violation of the game laws,—the standing grievance of the Norman

* Peter of Blois, p. 229.

† Ord. Vit., vol. ii. p. 466.

period ; and which Rufus, although he had given his promise that they should be repealed as the price of the native services against Odo, made more severe than even those of his father. The hatred of the nobles for the Flambard was owing to the excessive fines levied upon them for the supply of needy foreigners or base favourites ; but more especially to his reducing the value of their estates by a remeasurement of the lands granted by the Conqueror. But of all those who deplored the reign of William Rufus, and the elevation of his favourite, none had so many just grounds for complaint, and could bring so many charges against both the king and the minister, as the clergy. It is no palliation of their oppressor's crimes to say that what they suffered they had merited ; nor to say that the degradation of the church by Rufus was a natural result of its exaltation by his father. Both statements are true. The Normans, who were promoted to bishoprics and abbacies at the time of the Conquest, cared little, indeed nothing, for the Saxon constitution of the church ; whatever independence it possessed before their accession to its places of wealth and honour, they were willing to sacrifice as the payment for their possession ; and the Conqueror, who could brook no power in the state equal to his own, did not lose the opportunity then presented to him of making the church a civil institution, and its chief priests his spiritual barons. While, however, he thus regarded the church and the clergy, he did not violate the relation he had created ; but protected

the interests of the church, since they were conducive to his own. So that though the Norman clergy had sacrificed some of the highest prerogative of the church with the independence of its ministers, the care exercised by the king prevented the appearance of the evils which came to be felt so seriously in succeeding times. And there can be no doubt that had the successors of William possessed his prudence and sagacity, those evils—including that war of classes which, commencing with the reign of the second Norman, was handed down to the Plantagenets—might have been staved off, and certainly would never have disturbed the repose of the early Norman settlers. But Rufus was the very last man to exercise either sagacity or prudence. Whatever intellect he possessed was clouded by passion; and his inordinate desire for personal gratification led him to the most exorbitant expenses, the means of meeting which were dug, as it were, from the very foundation of his throne.

Prior to the Conquest, the church had the power of electing its own officers, whether bishops or abbots; and when one such officer died, his superior next in order took charge of the revenues of the benefice, and appropriated them as he saw fit. As the Conqueror constituted himself the patron of all church offices, and determined that with him should lay the power of appointment, it was natural that the revenues of the vacant sees should also be at his disposal; and accordingly we are told that he appointed an agent of his own to superintend such

property, and render an account of it to him. But we are further informed that he scrupulously paid to the next incumbent all moneys received during the vacancy. Without either putting too much reliance on his general integrity, or supposing him flagrantly dishonest, it is easy to see that he provided great opportunities for speculation. They were at any rate too evident to escape the notice of Rufus and his chancellor,—who “contended that the prelacies were fiefs, held of the king; the revenues of which, on the death of the actual tenant, ought to revert to the sovereign, till he, of his special grace, bestowed them on a new abbot or bishop.”* William acted on the suggestion of his minister, and ordered that the incomes of vacant bishoprics and abbacies arising from rents and other sources should be paid into his treasury. This newly-acquired wealth was perhaps found to be greater than was expected. It was certainly too great to be easily relinquished, and it was therefore pretended that there were no candidates sufficiently qualified for the largest and most lucrative posts; so that for several years William kept many of them in his possession. By a very natural progression the sale of ecclesiastical property quickly became a species of speculation, and was often put up to the highest bidder,—so that “there was no one rich except the money changer; no clerk, unless he was a lawyer; no priest, unless he was a farmer.”†

* Lingard. † Malmsbury, p. 336. Meaning of course by “farmer” one who “farmed” church offices, not the lands around them.

It is needless to point out that benefices filled by these means could scarcely by any possibility have become the property of men who were fitted for them. The men of piety and knowledge would generally be possessed of neither the wealth to purchase nor the spirit to crave them; but courtiers, parasites, soldiers, any who could obtain them either by money or favour, regarded them as objects of ambition; and, no matter how unfitted by habit, or deficient in education, either filled them themselves, or placed as their substitutes idle and unscrupulous clerks. “The reader,” says Lingard, “may easily conceive the extortions and dilapidations which were the invariable consequences of so iniquitous a system. The monks and the clergy belonging to the church were often compelled to seek a precarious subsistence from the charity of strangers; and the *men* of the prelate, those who held their lands of the church, were generally reduced to the lowest degree of penury. Nor did the mischief end here. Wealth so easily acquired was not easily surrendered. William kept the vacant bishoprics and abbeys for several years in his own possession; and, if he consented at last to name a successor, it was previously understood that the new prelate should pay a sum into the exchequer, proportionate to the value of the benefice.”

The richest benefice that had fallen to the royal treasury was unquestionably the archbishopric of Canterbury, which had become vacant by the death of Lanfranc, and which Rufus could not be prevailed

upon to fill up, alleging, in reply to every petition or remonstrance from the clergy, that he was unable to find a fitting successor to Lanfranc; but really expressing thus his unwillingness to give back to the church so valuable a source of wealth. The clergy appeared to accept the king's reason for his conduct as a valid one, and occasionally irritated him by recounting the virtues of those whom they vainly hoped that he would promote to the primacy.

In the autumn of 1092 the abbot of Bec came to England, at the request of one of his numerous friends in this country. His biographers are careful to have it known that it was on private affairs solely that he came here, and that it was only after much hesitation, occasioned by the unsettled state of the English church, and the fear that ambitious motives might be attributed to him, that he was prevailed upon to come. Undoubtedly the position of Anselm in England was a difficult one. He was well known to the clergy of Kent by the report of his pupils as the accomplished teacher of Bec, and by his visit thirteen years before, and as the intimate friend of their late primate. His character was so pure, his piety so unquestioned, and his learning so profound, that the clergy of the church of Canterbury felt the king could by no possibility object to him on the score of unworthiness or unfitness. When he entered Canterbury on the 7th of September, they saw that "the man and the hour had come." Crowding about him, they hailed him as their future arch-

bishop. The abbot was perplexed by this manifestation of affection, and sought to discourage their enthusiasm. The day following his arrival was the feast of the nativity of the Virgin, at which he was expected to be present; but the exhibition of clerical zeal he had witnessed on his entrance to the ecclesiastical metropolis caused him to hurry away immediately. Next day he reached the court of William. The king paid him great honour, and the nobility crowded about him to express their homage. In a private conversation with William, he entered on the delicate subject of the condition of the English church, and thus laid himself open to the suspicion of having suggested his own appointment. He certainly may not have intended to do so, but it was hardly possible for the king to think otherwise. Undoubtedly William had his suspicions, for after the abbot had left the court for the castle of the count of Chester, one of his friends sought to entertain the king with an account of his obvious and unequalled piety. "I know no one equal in piety to the abbot of Bec,—he loves God only, and cares for no temporal wealth," said his friend. "No," replied William, "not even for the archbishopric of Canterbury. But by the cross of Lucca, neither he nor any one save me shall hold that office!" On another occasion the lords temporal and spiritual waited upon the king, begging him to permit the offering of prayers throughout all the kingdom for the changing of his purposes respecting the appointment to the primacy. "Pray what you like," said

Rufus, "I shall do what I like." William must have been morally sure of the self-interested objects of Anselm when he heard that it was he who had prepared the form of prayer to be used, although it appears the abbot was extremely unwilling to take any part in the matter. He did, however, take part in it, and a very active part; and this fact, combined with many more which occurred afterwards, has given rise to a supposition by no means honourable to the character of the abbot, and which was evidently fixed in the mind of the king.

About Easter, 1093, Anselm was passing near Gloucester, on his way to the coast to embark for Normandy, when he was summoned in great haste to attend the king, who had fallen dangerously ill. With all speed Anselm comes to the sick, and, as was supposed, dying king; and exhibiting to him the terrors of the future, implores him to make reparation to the English church, and to do justice to the English people. The stricken tyrant promises everything,—gives freedom to the prisoners unjustly detained, and a bishop to the church at Lincoln,—pays his debts, swears to respect the rights of the people, and to enact only wise and good laws. The happy courtiers who stand around thank heaven, and pray for the salvation of so good a prince. But the clergy do more. They gently ask him if he can nominate no successor to Lanfranc, so long since deceased. He listens to them and asks in reply who among them is worthy of such an honour. In

tremulous haste each bishop reckons up the clerical virtues he thinks he once possessed, and half dares to hope their sum will win the primacy. But Rufus cuts short the hope and fear by himself naming Anselm. It must have been with a severe internal struggle he brought himself to designate, amid the joy of the bishops, him who only a short time before he had sworn should not receive the gift. Anselm heard the news of his election with emotion, and positively refused to be conducted before the king. He represented that his age, habits of life, his repugnance to political strife, the duties of his monastery, his obedience to the duke of Normandy and his metropolitan, unfitted him for the office; and demanded that he should remain an abbot. The bishops, on their part, urged him to accept it, on account of the services he would be able to render the church generally, and in consideration of the unanimity with which he was invited. They did not wait for his reply, but forcibly bore him into the presence of the king; he protesting against the illegality of the act. When the king heard that Anselm refused to be inducted into the archbishopric, he manifested the greatest grief; and conjured him by his personal sufferings, by his eternal interests, by the affection his family had always shown him, to accept the staff. The scene that followed bordered so closely on the ridiculous, that it will be better to dismiss it in a few words. The attendant bishops and courtiers, losing all patience with the abbot, had passed from entreaties to reproaches; and now

seizing his right hand, they violently plucked it from his bosom, and held it outstretched while the king presented the crozier for his acceptance. That it was forced upon him did not diminish the fervour with which "Te Deum" was sung, nor did it repress the joy of the episcopal clergy that England once more had a primate.

CHAPTER IV.

ANSELM BECOMES ARCHBISHOP.

THE song of clerical thankfulness had scarcely died away, when Anselm returned to the bedside of the king, to urge upon him the necessity of calmly reconsidering the election he had just made. He assured William he did not himself regard his appointment as of any validity, nor need he at any future time feel scrupulous about recalling a promise which circumstances had forced him to make, and which in all probability he would not have made had he been free from the influence of the clergy. He left the king, and returned with weeping eyes to remonstrate with his friends for what they had done, and to warn them that in a short time, great as was then their joy, their sorrow would be greater, as the recovery of the king would be the recommencement of oppression and wrong.

Men less sanguine in their belief in amendment than the clergy of the English church in the eleventh century, might have been excused had they been seduced at this time into accepting the promises of William, so little was there to excite the suspicious. Men seemed compelled to trust the assurance of the

king, when they saw how eagerly he agreed to all their proposals for the good of his church and people; all saw in this election and the king's promises the beginning of a better time. The clergy looked forward to the possession of their monastic land and wealth in peace, to the time when men of learning, piety, and humility should obtain the preferments which could then only be bought by wealth, or secured by the wit of courtiers and the services of the king's creatures—to the time when the church meeting in its synods should be able to correct social enormities, control public violence, redress the wrongs of the oppressed, and stay the hand of the oppressor. The Saxon population that had been crushed even lower by the tyranny and cruelty of the second William than by the first, trusted that the doors which had been opened to let out those who had broken the harsh game laws, or turned in revenge upon some Norman lord and his retainers, were an omen of future freedom.

“It was a general jubilee.” The king hastened to finish a work he had begun so well, ordained that the new primate should be invested with all the wealth of the archbishopric; and though the promise was never fulfilled, we may give William credit for his intention. His earnestness for the completion of his purpose was shown by despatching letters to his brother the duke of Normandy, to the archbishop of Rouen, and to the monks of Bec, informing the latter of their impending loss, and begging from the former the dismissal of Anselm.

Pending the replies to these letters, Anselm left Gloucester, and celebrated Easter at Winchester. He was joined there by his old friend Gondulf, whom Lanfranc took from his society at Bec to invest with the honours and wealth of the bishopric of Rochester. The affection of Gondulf was warmed with the anticipation of having him for his bishop whom he had loved as his abbot; but he was too well acquainted with the character of the king to insist upon Anselm's acceptance of an office which the returning health of Rufus might render not merely irksome, but dishonourable. Together they left Winchester, and retired to a country mansion of Gondulf's to consider the pleas upon which this high office should be refused, or the conditions upon which it might be profitably accepted. While they discussed the matter which lay so near their hearts, William Rufus was recovering from his illness, and soon afforded them materials to assist their deliberation, but such as could only tell against himself. His illness had happened at a time almost fortunate for his interests, so far as they consisted in wronging others, and delaying the fulfilment of treaties he had been compelled to make. Those whose demands he had acknowledged to be just had ceased to urge their claims from pity for his troubles. Nothing could therefore afford a better test of his sincerity than the manner in which he would deal, upon returning health, with these delayed obligations. Let us see.

To William the Second, Scotland and Normandy were continual sources of annoyance and objects of

ambition. The one geographically a part of his dominion, but too far distant from the seat of his government, and inhabited by a race too energetic in their hostility, to be completely under his control, was nevertheless divided by natural barriers too slight to afford protection to contiguous territories, or to prevent the periodical invasion of its restless marauders. The other was the land which the sword of his ancestors had earned, and the wisdom of his father had enriched. It was the land of his birth and his boyhood. Its castles were held by men of his own blood, and with whom he had been reared and had fought. It was there that the ashes of his father reposed, and the very peasantry showed in their limbs and features their descent from the Norsemen of Rollo. Selfish as were the sons of William the Conqueror, much as they loved Normandy for the wealth and the honour it afforded, we yet believe there was present in their strong desire to possess it, some of that poetry and feeling which attached to a land surrounded by so many associations.

Previous to his illness William had been engaged at intervals during two years in repressing the invasions of Malcolm king of Scotland, who, related by marriage to the leading family of the Saxons, had often espoused their cause and revenged their wrongs. To his court had escaped, after the Conqueror had destroyed the camp at Ely, all that was left of Saxon nobility; and owing to the absence of any distinguished man among them, he came to be

regarded as their natural leader. Edgar Atheling, who, had he possessed the spirit as evidently as he did the right, would have been the successor of Harold, had accepted a grant of lands in Normandy from its duke ; but a treaty between the royal brothers, that gave a short peace to Normandy, deprived Edgar of his lands. He therefore crossed the channel, and visited the court of his brother-in-law Malcolm. To revenge the wrong done to the Atheling, the Scots entered England and ravaged the northern counties. They were repulsed by the inhabitants, but continued to worry the borders. William and Robert arrived about Michaelmas with only a small force, the remnant of a considerable army with which they had left Normandy, but which had been wrecked on the passage. William's circumstances compelled him to trust to the diplomacy of Robert rather than to the swords of his soldiers, and in consequence a truce was agreed upon in which it was stipulated that William should pay to Malcolm twelve marks of gold and restore to him twelve vills held by him under his father, and that Malcolm on his part should do fealty to William.

It was during the convalescence of William that Malcolm sent to him, offering to fulfil his share of the contract, and demanding the gold and towns. William replied by summoning Malcolm to his court. He was obeyed ; but with unabated pride and arrogance, he was refused an audience. Malcolm "could neither obtain a conference with our king, nor the performance of the conditions formerly promised

him," says the Saxon Chronicle.* "Moreover the king sought," says another, "to compel him to do him homage in his own court, and abide the judgment of his own barons only; but Malcolm was by no means disposed to do this, except on the borders of his own kingdom, where the kings of Scotland were wont to do homage to the kings of England, and according to the judgment of the barons of both kingdoms."† Such insolent conduct justly incensed Malcolm, who returned with rage to prepare his fifth, and, as it proved, his last invasion. The expedition was a most unfortunate one; for the Earl of Northumberland being aware of it, lay in ambush, and falling unawares upon the Scot, killed both Malcolm and his son Edward, heir to the throne. His queen Margaret died a few days after of grief, leaving three sons, who became successively kings of Scotland, and two daughters, one of whom married our English king Henry the First.

This expedition, so disastrous to Malcolm's family, was of immense advantage to William. The Scots, disgusted with those whom they believed to be the cause of all their misfortunes, drove the Saxon exiles from their country, and chose the brother of their late king for sovereign; but as Duncan the second son of Malcolm remained at William's court as hostage, he made the required homage, and retired to claim and obtain his father's crown, on condition that neither English nor French exiles should be harboured by him.

* Page 469. Bohn's Ed.

† Florence of Worcester, page 169. Bohn's Ed.

But it was not merely in his relation to the king of Scotland that Rufus showed that the old spirit of tyrannical pride and haughty selfishness was unsubdued. The treaty which had been made with Robert in the spring of the previous year, and which had caused the war with Scotland, was still unfulfilled.

By the will of the Conqueror, Normandy was the inheritance of his eldest son, and nominally it remained his until his expedition to the East; but its real lords seem to have been those turbulent de Breteuils and de Mellents, de Belesmes and de Beaumonts, who fortified castles, seized the property of their neighbours, some their neighbours themselves,—who were ever ready for war, no matter in what cause or under what leadership, so long as it yielded them excitement and increased their wealth. Sometimes under the influence of William they quarrelled with Robert; or at other times to maintain the honour of their lord they fought beneath his standard against the kings of France; but generally their quarrels were of a more personal character,—jealousy, avarice, and lust aroused their hostility and unsheathed their swords. They had gained strength upon the death of the Conqueror. During his life their castles were watched by his soldiers; but before Robert had time to take the government upon himself, they had turned the wardens from their castle keeps, and fortified them as the strongholds of petty princes. From these strongholds they would issue surrounded by their men-at-arms,

and attacking the castle of some offending neighbour, would besiege it till compelled to raise the siege or able to obtain their end. Travellers on the roads, peasantry in their villages, even wives and daughters of barons, were not safe from their molestation. "They only rejoice, and their triumph will be of short duration, who can rob and thief without restraint."*

Of all men, duke Robert was the least fitted to govern such reckless spirits. Generally intent only upon the indulgence of the moment, he was too indolent to seek for those who concealed all but the result of their crimes, and too lenient to punish those who were obviously criminal. His leniency proceeded more perhaps from his sympathy with the crimes than from his tenderness for the criminals, for he was himself bold, chivalrous, fond of romance and excitement. He besieged his brother Henry in the fortress of St. Michael, but finding that the garrison was in want of water, he ordered his sentinels not to watch too closely that side of the rock on which supplies were obtained,—jauntily observing, that it was a shame to kill his brother with thirst, since if he lost him he could not find another.† No one was more capable of gaining advantage over a man of this sort than William Rufus. He had all the qualities which Robert lacked. Cunning, selfish, and secretive, he fomented quarrels among the barons; and alternately assisted to besiege Henry in the Cotentin, and to drive Robert from Rouen,

* Ord. Vit., vol. ii. p. 503.

† Malmsbury, p. 333. Bohn's Ed.

knowing that, in the disunion of his brothers lay his own strength. The treaty into which he had entered with the duke in the spring of 1092, and which has been already mentioned, was important for its concessions on his part. It stipulated that "the earl should give up Feschamp, the earldom of Eu, and Cherbourg, to William; and withal that the king's men should be unmolested in those castles of which they had possessed themselves in the earl's despite. And the king on his side promised to reduce to their obedience the many castles conquered by their father which had since revolted from the earl, and also to establish him in the possession of all their father's territories abroad, excepting those places which the earl had then given up to the king. Moreover, all who had lost their lands in England on account of the earl were to regain them by this treaty, and the earl also was to receive certain estates in England then specified. It was also agreed that if the earl died, leaving no legitimate son, the king should be heir of all Normandy; and in like manner if the king died, that the earl should be heir of all England. Twelve of the chief men on the part of the king, and twelve on that of the earl, guaranteed this treaty by oath. Yet it was observed but a short time." * It may rather be said, the treaty was never observed at all. William did not regard it as accordant with his interests to bring the rebellious barons of Normandy into the same obedience and order in which they were during the reign of his father; and

* Ang. Sax. Chron., p. 467.

he therefore allowed month after month to elapse, and messenger after messenger to arrive, without his showing the least disposition to fulfil his promises.

Three months had elapsed since the nomination of Anselm to the primacy, when William engaged with his continental affairs, and returning to London from a conference with the Earl of Flanders at Dover, stayed at Rochester. Gondulf and his friend waited upon him there; the former, to offer him congratulations on his recovery to health,—the latter, to obtain an audience upon business. Gondulf seems to have added something of a hortative character to his congratulations on the king's health; and probably suggested some tangible way in which he could manifest his gratitude, as the king's reply was characterized neither by liberality nor reverence. "I tell thee, O bishop, that never from me shall God receive good in return for the evil with which he has loaded me." The private audience that Anselm asked was granted, and he then repeated the remonstrances he expressed on the occasion of his forcible nomination. He urged William to consider that personally he was still unwilling to accept the office; but that if in obedience to the wishes of his friends, to the royal mandate, and to the calls of duty, he should consent to fill it, there were certain concessions he should be compelled to demand. They were as follows:—that the church of Canterbury be allowed to recover, without an appeal to legal tribunals, all the land it possessed in the time of Lanfranc, and any that could fairly be proved to have

appertained to it before his primacy;—that the king engage to follow his advice in all matters pertaining to the religious and social institutions of the country;—that he accept him as his spiritual guide and confessor;—and lastly, that he permit him to recognise Urban as pope in opposition to Clement, in relation to whom the English church had up to that time been neutral.

In reply to these four propositions, the king, having called before him his favourite bishop, William of Durham, and his favourite courtier, Robert de Beaumont, distinctly stated that he would restore all the lands of which the primate's church stood seized in the time of Lanfranc, that for any prior to his time, since alienated, he could not promise; but that upon this point, as well as upon the others, he would act as became a king. It has been supposed that a charter of William the Second, granting to Canterbury all the privileges and benefices pertaining to it, may be referred to this period; the supposition being strengthened by the fact, that the names of the bishops of Durham and Rochester appear as witnesses to the deed. Possibly so. This, however, is more satisfactory,—that at some time or other in the reign of Rufus, the privileges which Anselm constantly demanded were admitted by the king to be just and reasonable. Unquestionably, if the account be accurate, Anselm, regarded either as an ambitious churchman or unwilling nominee to the primacy, gained much by this audience. If the first, he gave the king to understand he was one who knew how

to make conditions to his own advantage. If the second, his conscience was clear. At all events, the real contract which bound Anselm and Rufus was not made in the hurry and riot of the sick chamber at Gloucester, when the king was humbled by suffering, and terrified by the thought of death; but at Rochester, in the presence of the crafty bishop of Durham, and “the provident and wily” Robert de Beaumont, whose “prudence never failed,” and whose “counsels were profound”^{*}—at a time when the king was in one of his least generous moods, and, judging from his reply to Gondulf, not more likely to show reverence to God than to do justice to man. Rufus left Rochester for Windsor immediately after this conference; but seems to have reconsidered his arrangement, and to have regretted his concessions,—for in the course of a few days he sent to Anselm, begging him to except from the demanded church lands those which he had given to his vassals since Lanfranc’s death. Anselm refused,—and this refusal probably made the king his enemy for life. What the king did upon this refusal does not appear, but that he remained satisfied cannot be conceived for a moment. His subsequent conduct precludes the possibility of such an opinion. He nevertheless took no openly hostile step; and in a council held at Winchester in the month of September, 1093, Anselm was induced by the promises he made to do homage for the lands of his archbishopric.

A writer in the *British Critic*† has said that

^{*} H. Huntingdon, p. 308. Bohn’s Ed.

† 1820.

Anselm waited seven months after his investiture with the temporalities of his see before he did homage for them; and that during the delay the king discovered his designs. The second part of the statement is true, as we understand the word "designs." Unquestionably the intentions of Anselm were totally different to William's, and as unquestionably the king discovered that difference before the Winchester council. The first part of the statement would be true, if instead of "investiture" it had been said "promise of investiture." Not only did Anselm not gain possession of the wealth of the archbishopric immediately upon his nomination,—but we are told by Florence of Worcester that he was only promised to be "permitted to receive anything from the archbishopric, beyond what the king allowed, until the annual rent which he had received from it since Lanfranc's death was fully paid."* Lanfranc died at the end of the month of May. If, therefore, the king kept his word, Anselm did not receive investiture till June; and it may have been later. But, in truth, the delay did not arise on Anselm's part, but from the insincere and procrastinating character of the king, who, regretting the promise he had made, sought to render his gift less valuable by the conditions in which he bound it.

In little more than two months after the court at Winchester had witnessed the feudal homage of Anselm for the lands of the primacy, the cathedral

* Page 195. Bohn's Ed.

of Canterbury was adorned to receive its archbishop. The slights of the king, and the insults received from the chancellor during the last few months, were more than compensated by the joy of the people and clergy. The consecration was performed by Thomas, archbishop of York, on the 4th of December, 1093. Walkelin, the bishop of Winchester, reading aloud the written form of election, came to the words, "My brother bishops, it is known to all of us how long it is since the church of Canterbury, which is the metropolitan of all Britain, has been deprived of a pastor," when Thomas of York, true to the dispute which the authority, not the logic of Lanfranc had ended, interrupted the reader by demanding, "If the church of Canterbury is the metropolitan of all Britain, how can the church of York, which passes for being metropolitan, be so?" The dilemma was evident. It was therefore agreed that "metropolitan church of all Britain" should be altered to "primatial church of all Britain," and so the controversy ended; and Thomas consecrated Anselm to be primate. Towards the close of the ceremony of consecration, the bishops stood around the kneeling Anselm, and extended above him the Gospels, opened by chance; when one, seeking, according to the custom, for some prophetic meaning in the page, read aloud the verse, "He invited many, and sent his servant, and they all began to make excuses." The application was not very apparent, either for its prophetic or retrospective character.

Anselm soon after visited the court, and the wel-

come he received from the king and nobility made him look with confidence upon the future.

It is not surprising that, in an age when the pleasures of scholarship were so little known, and when honour and wealth were found combined in so few positions, the contemporaries of Anselm should consider his strong repugnance to accept of the English primacy merely a veil under which he concealed his ambition. Neither Rufus nor the bishops who held office under him could conceive it possible that a man should undertake the responsibilities and duties belonging to the head of a great church from any other motive than the love of gain. There was scarcely a bishop in England who had not eagerly purchased, by money or service, the bishopric that had amply repaid the outlay. Such men readily sympathized with the king,—who doubtless, even in his most religious moods, believed what the circumstances preceding his illness had suggested, and regarded Anselm as one who, having always urged upon the nobility the importance of obtaining a primate, used the influence which the accidental illness of the king, and his authority as confessor supplied to him, as a means of procuring his own nomination;—that his entreaties to his friends, his remonstrances to the clergy, and his repeated refusal to the king, were only the affected opposition of a man who was determined to obtain large concessions by apparent indifference, and a character for humility by its simulation. Such opinions are still largely held; indeed it is the exception to find an historian, willing

to believe that the Norman archbishops were ever actuated by any other principle than that of self-love. It is certainly remarkable that all the prelates who have attained eminence in our history displayed reluctance to accept the royal favour of nomination ; but the method of disposing of the difficulty by classing them altogether as hypocritical and covetous, though obviously an easy one, is not so obviously truthful or philosophical. In dealing with the characters of such men, we have no right to do what is nearly always done,—to consider that they had two sets of morals, two modes of life, two consciences ; that in the more retired relations of life they were self-denying, liberal, and essentially upright ; but in the outer world they were hypocritical, grasping, oppressive. Such a duality seems almost impossible at all, but quite impossible for any length of time. The one would certainly destroy the other. Either the private life would become assimilated to the outer, or the outer would become the expression of the inner. So far as we are concerned with Anselm, it does not appear possible that any man who has read his Meditations, and who is at all acquainted with his private life, can seriously charge him with systematic hypocrisy. In every other relation of life save the one that he sustained towards the English church, he earned and has received the praises of the writers of every party. As a monk, he was diligent in his studies, laborious in works of benevolence, and constant in his religious exercises. As a teacher, he was successful and renowned,

increased the wealth of his monastery, added to its fame, and trained men who occupied, in after years, some of the highest positions in the church. As an author he stood first in his age, and left works which furnished a method of thought for one of the ablest thinkers of the seventeenth century. As a prior and an abbot, he obtained authority over his inferiors, and secured the order of his monastery, and displayed a character of such transparent purity that the rude courtiers of the Norman kings hushed their ribaldry at his approach, and even those kings themselves were proud to do him reverence.

Undoubtedly the circumstances attending the nomination of Anselm are well calculated to impair our confidence in his prudence, but they incidentally confirm his integrity. No one who was anxious to guard his honour from suspicion, would have been induced to prepare the prayers that the church offered for the king's conversion to its desires ; but that he was induced, shows that he conceived no one would question his motives. And surely even no one can now regard such an act as anything more than an imprudence ; for if Anselm had been then entering on a systematic course of hypocrisy, it would have been fatal to his purpose to have done that which would not merely have excited suspicion, but taken from him the power of afterwards defending his integrity by supplying an instance of his lack of it. Anselm, however, was called to defend himself from the suspicions of his friends in Normandy ; and the letters that he wrote to them may be used as his

present defence. He undertook to communicate to his monks at Bec the fact of his forcible nomination, and his probable separation from them; and he did so in a letter of remarkable pathos and piety.* He commences by speaking of the inexpressible affection which has existed between them, now to be broken. He tells them of the bitterness of his heart since the day on which he was nominated to the primacy,—how time after time he has revolved and considered the matter before God. Of his intense misery, he says, no one could be ignorant who looked upon his face the day on which he was nominated. He describes how, more dead than alive, the clergy forced the pastoral staff into his hand,—how affected he was by his ineffectual struggles with them,—and how so fearful were they of his fainting, that not only did they sprinkle him with holy water, they even gave it him to drink. Then, as if fearful that some might judge him harshly, or as if he had heard of some who suspected him, he refers to his confidence in his own integrity. His conscience, he says, does not accuse him before God,—and not with gladness, but with deep sorrow, he had accepted the office offered to him; that he saw not how he could flee from it; that he had prayed that the cup might pass from him; but that from henceforth he will say, Not as I will, but as Thou wilt. And so he continues and concludes his letter,—giving his monks counsel and consolation, bidding them remember that he is not theirs, nor are they his, but both are God's.

* Epis. III. 1.

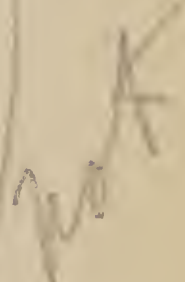
Touching as was this letter from its mournful character, it did not save Anselm from the reproaches of his friends, nor preserve him from their suspicions. They hinted that he had shown extreme haste in his acceptance of the office, and forgetfulness of their interests in admiration of the preferment. He replied to their accusation in another letter,* which showed by its earnestness how bitterly he felt their want of confidence. He describes with eloquence both the misery he has suffered, and the principles which have guided him. He owns his duties towards them, but demands a recognition of his higher duties. For them he was made an abbot, but it was to God that he gave himself on becoming a monk. He belongs to them only by the will of God and for his service. They did not enter Bec for him, but for God, and they must therefore submit to his dispensations. He appeals to God to be his witness that he was not attracted to the episcopacy by the desire of anything that his servants ought to despise,—that if his duty and his desire for the welfare of the church had permitted him, he would much have preferred the life of a monk under the superintendence of another, than the command of others, and the possession of wealth. He asks that if his conscience has deceived him, he may be instructed and corrected. He trusts from that time, that God will take his defence into his own hands against any who may utter unworthy suspicions of him; and he warns all such that the sin will fall upon them.

* Epis. III. 7.

Of the sincerity of Anselm, then, we have not the slightest doubt. He was fitted by natural temper and by education for retirement. "I am," said he of himself, "like the owl; "I am only pleased with obscurity, and with the company of my little ones; like him, too, when surrounded by others, I am persecuted and worried." He was fitted for those quiet and scholarly pursuits which yielded so large and rich a result; and it is impossible to doubt that he would have preferred the solitude of Bec to the busy primacy of England. That he did leave the monastery which had been his home for so many years, was because he felt that duty called him. Had he refused, there was no one so well fitted to take the office, and probably William would have offered it to no one else. His acceptance relieved the church of anxiety, and supplied the means of bringing together the churches of Rome and England. He had but one course to pursue, and he did pursue it. To have at first accepted the appointment gladly, would have been opposed to all his tastes, habits, and professions; but when forced upon him, to have relinquished it, would have been traitorous to the principles of his vocation.

But with all our admiration for Anselm, we cannot but think he was unfitted for the office to which the clergy of England had called him. Such of his contemporaries as knew him best, thought him better qualified for the head of an abbey than the primacy of an important church; and we think so too. If learning and piety had been the only requisites for a

candidate to the primacy, unquestionably Anselm would have been *the* man of his time. In those qualities he was probably superior to all of whom we have any knowledge; but in those most required in the head of the English church during the reign of William the Second, he was singularly deficient. His very piety was one of the causes of his failure. Had his moral nature been less sensitive, kingly habits which to him appeared absolute vices, courtly manners which he regarded with horror, would simply have excited his contempt, or produced a temporary disgust; but would hardly have allowed him to peril his influence over the king and nobles by public rebuke. For Anselm, however, to see an evil was to protest against it, although it might have been apparent to another man that his efforts to overcome it would be more successful if less evident and direct.



CHAPTER V.

ANSELM'S QUARREL WITH THE KING.

THE circumstances under which Anselm had accepted the primacy, and the evident reluctance with which William had installed him in that office, were ominous of an infelicitous future. It was obvious to all that the king regretted the election. He had made it, he had almost been cajoled into making it, during his illness; but he was now convalescent. William on a bed of sickness, pressed upon by the ignorant fears of an incensed clergy, was very different to William in good health, with heavy debts and an exhausted exchequer. It required but little penetration on Anselm's part to discover that it was William in weakness and adversity who had called him to this office, and that now he would recall his promises and revoke his acts. Some of the primate's friends thought differently. They urged what the king had done, and what he had promised to do; but Anselm saw deeper than his friends, and therefore feared more. He knew that there could be no real sympathy between himself, an old and lettered ecclesiastic, and a man full of passion, addicted to the lowest vices, and

incapable of following a connected speech of a quarter of an hour's length. He had respected Anselm when a stranger at his court, and had done honour to the first scholar in Normandy, so long as there seemed no possibility of the monk becoming his confessor. His nature was so essentially corrupt, and his selfishness so apparent in all his dealings with the church property, that he could have no sympathy with a man who appeared only anxious to discharge his duty, independently of the opinions of others, and to reform such abuses as he encumbered. "The plough of the church of England," said Anselm, "should be drawn by two oxen of equal strength,—the king and the archbishop of Canterbury; but if you yoke me, who am a weak old sheep, with this king, who is a mad young bull, the plough will not go straight."*

It can certainly no more be doubted that William regretted the nomination into which he had been forced, than it can be believed that he had kept the archbishopric vacant from inability to find a successor worthy of Lanfranc. He was too fond of ease to have risked the displeasure of his nobility, and to have endured the reiterated complaints of his clergy, upon a subject in which pertinacity and obstinacy did not bring him wealth. William never wanted an archbishop at all. It was his intention to have kept the primacy in his own hands far longer than he did,—and if at last forced to relinquish it, to have done so only on condition

* Henry's England.

of receiving a compensation for the loss of revenue. He had acted so with every office in the church save those which he filled up during his illness; and even in one of those he had placed a man from whom he afterwards extorted a large sum of money. It was ever money that William Rufus desired. His reign became noted for corrupt traffic of all kinds;—ecclesiastical lands and offices, civil appointments, pardons to criminals, were sold to any who could bring ready money for them. We are told that the king even stipulated for money to convert the unbelieving. “A Jewish youth imagined that St. Stephen had appeared to him, and commanded him to be baptized; this he obeyed. His father immediately flew to the king, earnestly entreating an order for his son to be restored to the faith of his ancestors. The king not discovering any advantage as likely to accrue to himself, remains silent; on this the Jew offers him sixty marks, on condition that he would restore his son to Judaism. William then orders the youth to be brought before him; relates his father’s complaint, and commands him to renounce his baptism. The lad, astonished, replies—“Your majesty is joking surely.” “I joke with thee!” exclaims the king; “begone, and obey my commands instantly, or by the cross at Lucca I will have your eyes torn out.” The young man remaining inflexible, he drove him from his presence. The father was then ordered before the king, who desired him to pay down the money he had promised; but, on the Jew’s remon-

strating that he had not reconverted his son, and the king's declaring that his labour was not to go unrewarded, it was agreed that he should receive half the sum."*

Had Anselm simply desired to lead a quiet, unmolested life in this country, in entire forgetfulness of the wants of the people about him, and the interests of the church generally, his wisest course in dealing with such a man would have been to have collected a large sum of money, and bought at once the favour of the king and his own freedom. He probably saw this; but if he did not, he was very early made aware of the fact by some of the creatures of the court. His position was a difficult one. As a feudatory, he had done homage to the king as his temporal lord; and therefore, in offering him a sum of money, he would be doing no more than was the usual custom. But such a sum as he was capable of giving would by no means come up to the expectations of the king; and it was probable that William, ever ready to entrap him, would, after he had received his present, hold him as a participator in his habits of simony. He describes, in a letter to which we shall have presently to refer, the poverty to which he was reduced by the tyranny of the king and the dishonesty of the chancellor; and we know from other sources that even after he had done submission, and received the investiture of the pastoral ring and staff, his tenants continued to pay their rents into the exchequer. So far from

* Note to Wm. Malms., p. 338.

the promises which he received at Rochester having been fulfilled, the barons who had received lands as gifts continued to hold them with the sanction of William. His personal relations to the king seem to have been very satisfactory; but such facts as these almost compel us to believe that all the insults heaped upon the primate were the direct act of the king. On the very day that Anselm entered Canterbury, prior to his consecration, he was summoned by the Flambard to appear in the king's court to answer "some imputed breach of privilege;" and though the action appeared to come only from the chancellor, it may be fairly regarded as the first of a long series of persecutions. Notwithstanding this, Anselm collected five hundred pounds, (Lingard says, he probably borrowed it,) and offered it to the king, but it was scornfully refused. The king treated the offer as niggardly, hoping by that means to drive the primate to further sacrifices; or by refusing so small a gift, to retain the right of extortion. Anselm begged him to accept it, promising him that at some future day he should receive more, and telling him that it was better to take a small sum from the hand of friendship than to snatch a great one by violence. "Keep thy money and thy remonstrances," said the king, in his usual stuttering way, now increased by his anger; "I have sufficient of my own. Go." Anselm went, remembering that on his first entrance to his metropolis, he had heard the words read from the evangelist—"No man can serve two masters."

He had saved himself from the suspicion of having bought his bishopric, but at the expense of his friendship with the king, he refused to listen to the suggestion of doubling the sum, and gave his five hundred pounds to the poor.

The quarrel thus inaugurated would probably have exhausted itself in the next few months, had not Rufus been too busy with his continental affairs to enter into further disputes. Robert, who, it will be remembered, had retired from England in disgust with the delays to which he had been continually subjected by the king, discovered on his return to Normandy so many acts of treachery and deceit on the part of his brother, that he sent repeatedly to him demanding the fulfilment of the treaty into which they had entered a year and three quarters before. Either William's answers were unsatisfactory, or his promises badly kept; for we find that early in the year 1094, while holding his court at Gloucester, he was waited on by messengers from the duke of Normandy, who "said that his brother renounced all peace and compact, if the king would not perform all that they had stipulated in the treaty; moreover, they called him perjured and faithless, unless he would perform the conditions, or would go to the place where the treaty had been concluded and sworn to, and there clear himself."* William, with his usual sagacity, accepted the last propositions of the heralds, and determined to attend a council, trusting, not un-

* Ang. Sax. Chron., p. 470.

wisely, that diplomacy would either mitigate the severity of an irksome treaty, or set him entirely free from its demands.

In the month of February, therefore, he went down to the coast, and while he waited for a favourable wind, he found time to attend to ecclesiastical affairs. He was detained at Hastings nearly a month; and while there, Anselm and the bishops paid their court to him, and transacted their various business. The primate, with the assistance of the king and court, consecrated the abbey which the Conqueror had founded in commemoration of his victory over the English, known then, and now, by the name of Battle Abbey: and at the same time he gave his benediction to Robert Bloet, bishop of Lincoln, from whom the king had extorted the enormous sum of five thousand pounds of silver. That Anselm should have consecrated him, after he had paid so large a price, supplied ample materials, to those who desired the favour of the king, for reflection upon the honour of the primate who had then shared the guilt of simony. The satires were repeated to the king, and gave him an opportunity of displaying his personal feeling to Anselm, which he did not lose. He exonerated the archbishop, but ended by saying he would not disgrace the primacy with the primate. The double-edged sharpness of such an expression would have cut the ties that united any other man than Anselm to the king. Nothing but the heroic fortitude of a saint, or the cringing selfishness of a parasite, could have

turned the keenness of its edge. But the object of the satire was proof against it. He had demands to make upon the king that would create an anger it would need all his patience to endure, and he was therefore silent then; but so soon as opportunity served, he urged upon the king the necessity of considering the wretched condition of society and morals, and the need there was for calling a synod for the repression of vice. Judging from what Anselm then said, and from most of the accounts that have come down to us, we should say the morality of the people in the reign of William the Second was of a very low order. Modern historians generally tell us that the vices that prevailed at that time were as remarkable for the novelty of their practices as for the disgracefulness of their character, and content themselves by specifying in Latin notes the practices to which they refer.* But the chroniclers of the time describe vividly and broadly the manners of both the nobility and humbler classes. There is occasionally, it must be confessed, both in the descriptions of the archbishop and the historians, an odd mixture of the follies of fashion and the immoralities of passion; causing some doubt in the mind of the reader as to which is the more detestable object of the two to the mind of the writer. The following passage sets before us an amusing as well as instructive picture of the social evils which Anselm attempted in vain to subdue:—"In former times, shoes with round

* See Lingard and Henry.

toes fitted to the form were in common use both by rich and poor, clergy and laity. But now, men of the world sought in their pride fashions of dress which accorded with their perverse habits; and what formerly honourable persons thought a mark of disgrace, and rejected as infamous, the men of this age find to be sweet as honey to their taste, and parade on their persons as a special distinction. . . . A debauched fellow named Robert, was the first about the court of William Rufus who introduced the practice of filling the long points of the shoes with tow, and turning them up like a ram's horn. Hence he got the surname of Cornard; and this absurd fashion was speedily adopted by great numbers of the nobility as a proud distinction and sign of merit. All this time effeminacy was the prevailing vice throughout the world. Men revelled in vice without remorse; and odious wretches, who ought to have been food for the flames, shamefully abandoned themselves to the foulest Sodomitical practices. The habits of illustrious men were disregarded, the admonitions of priests derided; and the customs of barbarians adopted in dress and in the mode of life. They parted their hair from the crown of the head on each side of the forehead, and let their locks grow like women, and wore long shirts, and tunics, closely tied with points. They wasted their time, spending it according to their own fancy, and without regard to the law of God, or the customs of their fathers. The night was devoted to banqueting and drunkenness, to silly talk, dice

tables, and other games. Thus, after the death of Pope Gregory and William the Bastard, and other religious princes, the simple habits of our fathers were abandoned in all the west of Europe. They used a modest dress, well fitted to the proportions of their bodies, which was convenient for walking and riding, and for all active employments, as common sense dictated. But in our days ancient customs are almost all changed for new fashions. Our wanton youths are sunk in effeminacy, and the courtiers study to make themselves agreeable to the women by every sort of lasciviousness. They insert their toes, the extremities of their bodies, in things like serpents' tails, which present to view the shape of scorpions. Sweeping the dusty ground with the prodigious trains of their robes and mantles, they cover their hands with gloves too long and wide for doing anything useful, and, encumbered with these superfluities, lose the free use of their limbs for active employment. The fore part of their heads is bare after the manner of thieves, while on the back they nourish long hair like harlots. In former times penitents, captives, and pilgrims usually went unshaved, and wore long beards as an outward mark of their penance, or captivity, or pilgrimage. Now almost all the world wear crisped hair and beards, carrying on their faces the tokens of their filthy lust, like slinking goats. Their locks are curled with hot irons, and instead of wearing caps, they bind their heads with fillets. A knight seldom appears in public with his

head uncovered and properly shaved, according to the apostolic precept. Their exterior appearance and dress thus exhibit what are their inward thoughts, and how little reverence they have for God."

For the reformation of these abuses, Anselm begged the king to give him his assistance by calling a synod. The king refused to do so. He saw no good that would arise from it, he said, and would hear no more of the matter. Anselm represented to him that there were many more things he wished to speak to him about; he presented to him a bill of grievances, couched in language severe, and at times hardly respectful. He gave the king to understand that he was the patron, but not the proprietor, of abbeys; that they were many of them without abbots; that their revenues were expended by barons and courtiers upon purposes foreign to the intention of their founders; that the monks lived without discipline; and that the necessities of the poor were unsupplied. "Are not the abbeys mine?" said the king. "You do what you please with your estates, and I will do what I will with my abbeys. I will do nothing you ask. It is not thus that your predecessor would have spoken to my father, nor shall you to me."

Anselm retired; but, wishing it to be understood that he had no personal enmity to the king, he begged the bishops to mediate. They did so; but to no purpose. The king's personal hatred was evident in all he said; but the love of money was

greater, and he offered to forgive the insult he had received, if Anselm would consent to pay five hundred pounds at once, and promise to pay five hundred more at a future time. The archbishop replied that his estates were too poor to furnish him with such a sum, nor would he renew an offer already refused; besides, the favour of the king was too great a thing to be so purchased. On his answer being reported to William, he exclaimed, "I hated him yesterday; I hate him more to-day; and let him know that I shall hate him still more the longer I live. Never will I acknowledge him as my father and my archbishop; I have no need of his prayers; I reject them. Let him not wait here to give me his blessing on my departure; let him go where he will."

"Upon this," says Eadmer, "we withdrew from court."

William sailed for Normandy; and before the four and twenty barons who had signed the treaty, and sworn to see its fulfilment, he defended his broken oath, but without success. The assembly decided against him, declaring he had broken faith. William was the last man to be coerced into active right by the opinions of others. Failing in diplomacy, he had recourse to violence; and, seizing the castle of Bures, he gave the signal of civil war. The duke retaliated by besieging and carrying Angences, with seven hundred of the king's soldiers; and victory, which seemed at first to favour William, soon deserted to Robert. In this emergency, the king sent orders

for the immediate embarkation of twenty thousand soldiers; but at the same time gave private instructions to his chancellor Ralph, that, upon their being mustered at Hastings, he was to take from each man the ten shillings he had received from his lord, or was supposed to carry with him for his support during the campaign, and to remit the same to him; the men being dismissed to their homes. The money proved of more service to him than the men might have done; for Robert having obtained the aid of the king of France, and their united forces marching down upon William, threatened to shut him up in Em, when he secretly opened negotiations with Philip, who, probably influenced by the twenty thousand contributions, returned to his own dominions. His defection was shortly afterwards followed in the dispersion of the whole army, and William's return to England.

On his road to London he was met by Anselm, who had employed the time of the king's absence in correspondence with his bishops, inquiring into the state of his diocese, and in further literary works. He now sought the king to gain his permission to leave England, for the purpose of obtaining the pallium from the hands of the pope, as his predecessor had done. "From the hands of what pope?" said William. Anselm named Urban. In an excited manner, the king demanded how he dared to acknowledge a pope whom he had not recognised; he ought to have known that it was not his custom, any more than his father's, to allow

any one to usurp his authority by recognising a pope. "It is impossible," said the king, "to maintain equal fidelity to your prince and the bishop of Rome." Anselm, unmoved by the threats of the king, begged to be allowed an appeal to a convocation of the nobility and clergy. This, after much angry altercation, was granted; and the 11th of March, 1095, was appointed for the assembly.

Since the year 1084, there had been two sets of popes reigning over Christendom, and dividing between them the allegiance of European churches. In that year, the Romans, tired of a siege that had lasted nearly two years, opened their gates to the army of the imperial Henry; and Hildebrand, still bold in his adversity, refusing either to negotiate with the conqueror or to recognise him as emperor, shut himself up in the fortress of St. Angelo. Henry, however, obtained the election of Clement and the deposition of Gregory. In a few months, Hildebrand was liberated from his confinement by Robert Guiscard, and retired to Cremona, where he died. The party which he left, did not, upon his death, despair of future success. They elected another pope, who, however, soon died; upon which Otto, bishop of Ostia, was elected at Terracina, under the title of Pope Urban II. He had, with a stream of alternating defeat and success, for six years been recognised as head of the church by those who were true to the policy and schemes of Hildebrand, and denounced by the imperial party of Clement, when Anselm held his conference with William on his return from Normandy.

Before his election to the primacy, and while simply abbot of Bec, Anselm, in common with most of the clergy of Normandy, had recognised in various ways the right of Urban to the chair of St. Peter. It is of little importance whether William was acquainted with that fact prior to the nomination of the primate, since it is unquestioned that Anselm told him of it both at the time of his election and afterwards at Rochester. It is not possible to believe that William's refusal to acknowledge Urban was based upon any far-sighted policy, or any desire to weaken permanently the power of the church in Europe. Had it been so, he would have made the refusal earlier, and made it a condition with Anselm prior to his consecration. The immediate causes were doubtless his personal hatred of Anselm, and the irritation of his vanity by the decided tone in which the primate spoke of Urban. But there was another, and to so bad a king a very important one. To have permitted the clergy of the English church to decide between the contending claims of popes, would have been to forfeit all the advantages that his father had secured; to open a channel through which every complaint of ecclesiastical misrule would have found its way to Rome; to reinvest the clergy with the power of excommunicating offenders, accepting bulls from the pope, and of quitting the kingdom without asking leave of the king. Not one of these concessions would Lanfranc, the personal friend of the first William, and the most confidential adviser of his sovereign, have been able to obtain. It cannot, therefore, be a

matter of surprise that William Rufus should refuse what seemed to him a part of his prerogative, to a man whom he personally detested and suspected. Unfortunately, Anselm was not a politician, otherwise he would neither have quarrelled with the king nor have been compelled to submit to a rude refusal. But he was an Italian by birth and by education, skilled in all the rigid rules by which the church of Rome attempted to bind to its papal chair the thrones of Europe; and he did not know how to disguise his hatred of the laxity he discovered in England. Between Normandy and Rome there was a continual commerce; but here he found bishops who had never seen Italy, who had held no sort of communication with it, and who acknowledged no pope.

Many of the clergy lacked neither instruction nor piety,—but they were attached to the crown more than to the church. From the king they had received not merely their benefices, but the right to dwell in the land where the benefices were situated. To him also they were bound by all the ties of the feudal system, and felt all the attachment to a policy of resistance to foreign interference which an interest in landed property can give. They had not ceased to recognise in principle the supremacy of the pontiff, but they would have been irritated by the least assertion of his power. They regarded, indeed, the very right to possess the papal chair as a gift which only the political rulers of Europe could confer. Even Rome itself had not always

maintained that the legitimacy of the pope was independent of the imperial recognition. It was that question, among others, that had produced the long quarrel between Henry and Hildebrand; and which had ended in giving two popes to Christendom. It is not, therefore, astonishing if in England the clergy were indifferent to these questions, which interested Anselm. The state of feeling he found here did violence to his principles, and shocked his prejudices; but the intensity of those prejudices showed his unfitness for the office he held. We must not forget, however, that his principles were as much greater than his prejudices, as his love of the truth was greater than his love of ease. He did not accept office from a desire for wealth, nor did he retain it from obstinacy. It was a sense of duty in the first case, and a love of principle in the second.

On Sunday morning, the 11th of March, 1095, there came together at Rockingham, the king, his chief barons, the archbishops, bishops, and abbots, to decide the question that had sprung up between the king and primate. Anselm opened the proceedings in a short forcible speech. "Certain words," said he, "have arisen between the king and me, which seem to have generated dissension; for when I lately begged permission to go to Rome, after the manner of my predecessor, to receive the pallium, I was told the king had not yet accepted Urban as pontiff, and that therefore he could not grant me permission; and that if I went without his permission, I should act contrary to the faith I had sworn to him, nor

should I less offend him, than if I attempted to take the crown from his head ; and further, that unless I renounced all subjection to Urban I must look for no authority in this kingdom. Such words astonished me ; seeing that I was an abbot in another kingdom, as you know, but by the providence of God, and to the sorrow of my friends there, brought to the primacy. It was by no ambition, by no desire, by no expectation on my part ; but for certain reasons I could not withstand, that I was compelled to this land." He then recounted the forcible manner of his election, reminded them of the earnest manner in which he refused the honour they thrust upon him ; and especially urged the fact that he then declared his adhesion to Urban. He continued : " But lest any one, being ignorant of my feelings concerning this thing, should defame my conscience, I now say, that but for my reverence for the will of God, I would, had I the choice, rather throw myself to be burnt upon a funeral pile than rise to the dignity of the primacy. But seeing your importunity, and the strength of your desire, I gave myself to you, and undertook the burden you imposed upon me, trusting to the help which you promised me. And now the time has come for you to lighten that burden by your counsel. To obtain your counsel, this assembly was called ; and you are to inquire whether, with all fidelity due to the king, I can observe my obedience to the Apostolic chair." He concluded by saying that he wished to fulfil all his duties,—that it would be a serious thing to deny his allegiance to the vicar of St. Peter,

—and it would be a serious thing to be wanting in the faith he had sworn to the king ; but it would be a serious thing to find, as he had been told, that he could not fulfil one of these duties without violating the other. Of the eight prelates who sat in the council, two alone were faithful to their faith and their chief,—Gondulf of Rochester, and Ralph of Chichester. Being Sunday, the assembly broke up early ; and on its return the following morning, Anselm asked the bishops whether they held the opinion of the previous day. They replied, that if he would simply submit himself to the judgment of the king, he should have their support and counsel ; but if this submission were not made promptly, they would withdraw their allegiance. Upon this, Anselm, standing erect, with animated countenance, an imposing voice, and eyes looking to heaven, said: “ Since you, who are called pastors and princes of a Christian people, will not give to me, your chief, your advice and support, except according to the will of one man, from you to the highest Pastor and Chief of all I turn, to the Angel of the great council I go, and in this matter, which belongs to Him and his church, I shall receive that counsel which I ought to follow. To the most blessed apostle Peter He said, ‘ Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church,’ etc.; and to the apostles collectively He said, ‘ Whosoever heareth you, heareth me ; and whosoever despiseth you, despiseth me.’ These words which we believe to have been spoken to Peter, we regard as said to his vicar, and through him to the other

bishops, who sustain the office of apostles, and not to emperors, kings, dukes, nor counts, to whom we are commanded to ‘render the things which belong to Cæsar.’ These are the counsels of God ; to these I subscribe, these I accept. Understand, therefore, that in matters pertaining to God and his church I shall obey the successor of St. Peter ; in things pertaining to the dignity of my lord the king, I shall fulfil the duties of a counsellor and faithful servant.”

This message the primate desired his bishops to carry to the king ; but they, terrified by the anger they knew such words would produce, refused to report them to him ; whereupon Anselm, followed by his suffragans, went himself, and there repeated to William all he had before said. He then retired, leaving the king too enraged to reply. The assembly was in confusion and disorder. The bishops and barons consulted in whispers upon the best advice to offer. Groups of twos, threes, and fours were scattered about, earnestly seeking some means which would, without being an open violation of Anselm’s principles, reconcile him and the king. After a considerable delay the bishops with some of the nobility returned to the archbishop, whom they found reclining against the wall, asleep. The message they brought from the king differed in nowise from what had been before said to him ; he was again charged with disloyalty to his sovereign, and was urged to consider that from Urban he should expect neither wealth nor honour ; but that it became him, as primate of

the kingdom, to act in conformity with the king's wishes. "I hear what you say," said Anselm, "but on all other things I shall be silent, except this, that I will never withhold my obedience from the pope. The evening is drawing on; if it is agreeable let us break up the assembly till to-morrow: I will then reply in such words as God shall have been pleased to inspire me with." Owing to the advice of the bishop of Durham, the adjournment was not agreed to; the bishop thinking he perceived in Anselm's desire for it a tendency to submission. The bishop of Durham acted in the whole of this business at Rockingham as the chief councillor and prolocutor of the king. He had promised somewhat rashly—as it afterwards appeared—that he would compel Anselm to deny his allegiance to the pontiff, or by returning the ring and staff to renounce all claim to the primacy. The king now frankly admitted his anxiety for the dismissal of Anselm, but the archbishop was no more to be driven from his office by threats than to be drawn from his allegiance to the pope by promises. The bishop of Durham had done his utmost, as he thought, to fulfil his promise to the king; and, enraged with the obstinacy of the primate, he declared that his conduct was treason to the king, and ruin to all the clergy. He had perhaps hardly expected to find one who had been so long quiet, and unmoved alike by threats and bribes, exhibit such a capacity for indignation and bravery. Anselm rose and dared any one to prove him guilty of treason to his king because he had refused to be

unfaithful to his bishop; such a man would find him ready to answer such a charge in the appropriate way and place,—(“*sicut debeo et ubi debeo.*”) This, which fell upon the ear of William of Durham as a mere personal taunt, carried to the king the fact that his archbishop knew there was no one there who had power to try him. It was like the appeal of Paul to Cæsar. In a great rage he adjourned the assembly till the morning; when the crowd of clergy and nobles returned. The constitution of the council was not of so exclusive a character as we should have supposed; there being present a number of inferior monks, clergy, and laity. It was partly to the advantage of Anselm, as would appear from the applause he occasionally received from the laity. One instance is hardly worth much, but we are told that a knight, becoming excited, addressed Anselm in the name of the people as their father, and referred him to the happy example of Job. A writer who was present says, “All took courage from the incident, placing confidence in this word—‘*Vox populi, vox Dei:*’ a most infelicitous recollection, if it be remembered how often the *vox populi* has not proved *vox Dei.*”

The position of the king had now become most serious. To attempt to depose Anselm would be to deprive himself of the support of even the bishops, and already his harshness had evoked for his opponent the sympathies of the nobility. Under these circumstances he determined to isolate Anselm from his suffragans. “If you cannot try him, at least you

can refuse obedience to him." All the bishops, with one exception, agreed, but at the expense of their popularity. The laity, as they passed through the hall, murmured the names of Judas, Pilate, and Herod, famous for infidelity and wrong; and the nobles, as a body, refused to abjure fidelity to him who was their pastor.

To these nobles the king was obliged to look as mediators, finding that Anselm would not resign his see, and determined that he would not give him a safe conduct as primate. The king was induced to agree to a truce until Whitsuntide; so this dispute found a temporary solution.

CHAPTER VI.

AN ILLUSTRATIVE EPISODE.

THE quarrel between the king and his primate, which we have just now brought to a temporary conclusion, was not the only one in which William was engaged during this year. For some months he was obliged to take the field, and carry on a civil war of considerable extent with a few powerful barons of the north of England. Unfortunately we have but a very meagre account of this quarrel; and the causes of it are very variously stated by contemporary writers. By some it has been said to have arisen out of the king's treatment of Anselm; but that is more than doubtful. Not only is it very unlikely that men who had permitted and shared in the division of church property, should take up arms to support an archbishop's opinion on ecclesiastical law; but the time at which the northern quarrel commenced was much earlier than the public dissensions of William and Anselm. The account of William of Malmsbury is more probable. He says that the exclusive claim which William Rufus made to the right of hunting, and the tyranny he exercised in making it a capital offence to kill a stag, caused

many conspiracies among the nobility, one of which issued in the rebellion of Robert de Mowbray. Another cause is assigned by Ordericus, who enters more largely into the details of this transaction; and in doing so, gives us some remarkable traits of the free-booting barons of the eleventh century. From him we learn that a northern earl named De Mowbray and his nephew, with their retainers, had seized the ship and cargo of some Scandinavian merchants; many of whom at this period traded largely with our principal ports. The merchants, powerless in the towns where the robbery had been committed, carried their complaint to the king, who ordered the barons to restore to the merchants all they had taken from them. The order was not obeyed; and William, having made an inquiry into the amount of loss, paid the sum from the exchequer.*

That year the king held his Easter court at Winchester; but De Mowbray, disregarding the obligations of his rank, did not appear. The king, enraged that the earl should add to the injustice done to the Danish merchants this insult to his court, commanded that all "who would remain in peace" should attend his next court; but to Robert de Mowbray he would "neither give hostages nor pledges of safety." In consequence, Robert was not there, and William prepared speedily to march into Northumberland. The expedition was neither too premature nor extensive, as the king found upon

* Ord. Vit.

his arrival in the north. De Mowbray was not alone in his opposition, several northern earls shared his animosity, and assisted in his preparations for resistance. The circumstances following the plunder of the Danish vessel had served only as the occasion for opposition to the king, and that which William supposed was confined to De Mowbray, he found to be a general rebellion. A plan had been formed to seize the king, and probably to murder him—certainly to dethrone him—and to place Stephen d'Aumale, cousin of De Mowbray, on the throne. William learned these facts from a repentant or cowardly member of the league, who, meeting him as he was about to enter a wood, warned him not to pass through it, as an ambush was waiting to carry out the purpose of the conspirators. Rufus avoided the danger, and finally conquered his enemies.

Robert de Mowbray was the son of Roger de Mowbray, and nephew of the wealthy but unclerical bishop of Coutances, from whom he inherited two hundred and eighty English manors. Such great possessions would have made any man prominent in the reign of Rufus; but no one so much so as Robert de Mowbray. He is described as being tall, dark, and powerful; silent and moody in manner; and as he seldom smiled when speaking, he was regarded as melancholy and harsh. The conspiracy against William was his so far as its leadership was concerned, and therefore against his castle and property William directed his attacks. Newcastle and Tynemouth were soon taken, and with them

Robert's brother. The king left a garrison in these forts, and proceeded to besiege Bamborough, which was defended by De Mowbray. Owing to the marshy land on which it stood, he found it impossible to bring his men up to the walls; the king was therefore obliged to content himself with watching the besieged, and trusting to time to accomplish what he could not. To facilitate his purpose, he built a fort opposite the castle, and with a malicious playfulness worthy of his father called it "Malvoisin." Trusting that it might prove so to his enemy, he left the blockade to the care of his soldiers, and set out to quell an insurrection in Wales.

The conspiracy against the life of the king had now returned to its original character, and had become a quarrel with a single baron. The friends who had pledged themselves to act with Robert, had, on the arrival of William, either enlisted under his standard, or had refrained from acting against him. De Mowbray called upon them to observe their oaths; but no one attempted to raise the siege. The wardens of Newcastle, however, during the king's absence, sent him a message promising to admit him, if he could leave Bamborough by stealth. The message itself may have been treacherous; it certainly was unfavourable to Robert. He took it, however, in good faith, and, accompanied by about thirty men, he set out from his castle. His party was intercepted, and was obliged to take refuge in a monastery, where he defended himself gallantly for

six days. Most of his men being killed and himself wounded, he fled to the church from which he was dragged forth a prisoner. Shortly after Michaelmas William returned, and leading Robert before the walls of his castle, he threatened to put out his eyes, unless his wife should immediately open the gates. She had only been married three months, and to save her husband she complied; and thus concluded one of the most serious rebellions in the reign of William the Second.

Among the prisoners was Morcal, a kinsman of De Mowbray; from him William learnt the magnitude of the conspiracy which had just been suppressed. Clergy and laity had shared the enterprise. The revenge of Rufus surpassed the magnitude of the treason. Robert de Mowbray he confined in Windsor Castle, where he lived a prisoner thirty years. Roger de Lacy he entirely disinherited and banished. Hugo of Shrewsbury he rebuked and fined three thousand pounds. William d'Eu was permitted to prove his innocence by single combat; but the trial going against him, he was condemned to lose his eyesight; and if the evidence of a chronicler is to be trusted, to gratify the jealousy of his enraged wife, he was subjected to a punishment more disgraceful, and not less horrible. The other conspirators were wisely pardoned, lest despair should exasperate to a further and more successful rebellion.

The debates which had been held during the Rockingham council made little real difference in the relative positions of William and Anselm, though

each appeared to slightly shift his ground. On the one hand the king had kept his resolve ; he had not allowed the archbishop to acknowledge the rule of Urban, nor had he given him permission to go to Rome. So far he might be said to have gained, but his losses were greater to the minds of all reflecting men ; he had failed in making Anselm either deny his allegiance to the pope, or quit his see without permission ; and he had rendered it apparent to all that his determination and pertinacity did not arise from a kingly sense of royal prerogative, but from a mean, unmanly desire to possess himself of the wealth of the church. Anselm, on the other hand, was primate in name only ; his suffragans had with a single exception deserted him ; those who admired his conscientiousness wondered at his obstinacy, and recommended a slight concession ; he was sustained only by the voice of conscience and the sense of duty ; he was without the power of holding even a synod ; and to have asked permission of the king to be allowed to do so, would only have subjected him to insult and refusal. As a man he was without influence over the king, as a prelate without the power which should belong to his office ; his strength lay only in this, that he could be deposed by none but the pope, and that his voice could pronounce the dreadful anathema of the church. His perplexity at this time seems to have been very great ; there were none in England with whom he could advise save Gondulf of Rochester, and the two monks who so faithfully attended him, and they

were inspired with too much awe of him to allow them to be fitting counsellors. He describes in a long letter, which he wrote to the archbishop of Lyons, all the difficulties which he had encountered, and the unhappy position in which he was then placed. In this letter we have his own word, that before giving his consent, he openly declared that he was in favour of pope Urban, and further that for six months he did and said all he could say and do blamelessly, to avoid the honour of the primacy. It is of some importance to have the assertion of Anselm on matters of this kind; as it places the conduct of the king in the worst possible light, and vindicates Anselm from the charges of duplicity. We learn also from this letter, that in the archbishop's opinion, the enmity of the king arose mainly from his ineffective efforts to procure money for the gift of the primacy:—"To force me to give more, the king disdained what he thought so niggardly a present, but I would not offer more, * * * * and from that time he has seemed to seek for opportunities of thwarting me." This reason for the royal hostility is certainly not contradicted by the facts we have related.

The other matters enumerated in the letter are substantially the same as are given by others. If Anselm's word be worth anything, and if it is not it is useless to seek for fidelity in his age, the troubles of William's reign arose entirely through the faithlessness and covetousness of the king, and that the resoluteness of Anselm was owing to his sense

of the responsibility under which he lay to all future primates and bishops. He says, "The king presented me with the archbishopric under the promise that I should receive it as held by Lanfranc to the close of his life, and now he takes from the church and its primate, what the church and its primate have held without question, and what he has himself pledged to me. For it is certain that this archbishopric will not pass to any after me except in the condition that I hold it at my death, or if unexpectedly there be a new king during my life, he will only grant me such property as I possessed under his predecessor. If, then, I continue to hold thus diminished the archbishopric of Canterbury to my death, the church will suffer loss through my fault. If violence were done, or permitted to be done to the church by any who were not legally its guardians, the church might afterwards recover its rights; but when the king who is its patron, and the archbishop who is its guardian, do and permit the wrong, what could be held in the future, but that what the king had done, and the archbishop had permitted, should stand as the rule? It would be better, then, for me not to hold the church lands upon such conditions; but poor, as were the apostles, in protest against the violence done me, to fill the episcopal office. However, I think that if being consecrated metropolitan bishop, I permit the first year to pass entirely away, without going where I can to seek the pallium from the pope, I am in the dilemma of a legitimate deposition. If I cannot fulfil this

duty, without losing the archbishopric, it were better that it were violently torn from me; it were better to abandon it than to deny the apostolic allegiance. * * * * ”

Anselm might have added in a few weeks a postscript to this letter, containing another instance of kingly infidelity; the truce sworn to at Rockingham was broken shortly after it was made,—the primate's chamberlain was seized in his presence, two of his friends were driven from the kingdom, and several of his dependents were treated with great harshness. It may be said that this was not done by William's order; it can hardly be said that it was done in opposition to his wishes, or with any expectation that those who did it would receive a reproof for their zeal; he certainly showed no open hostility to Anselm, but that may be accounted for by considering that he had learnt how powerless were threats when directed against such a man. William had recourse to deceit and diplomacy; he gained little by them but time. He sent two of his chaplains on a secret mission to Rome, instructing them to observe the state of parties there, and to obtain by any means they thought advisable the pallium, and the pope's permission for its disposal at the king's pleasure. The chaplains were well received at Rome; Urban was overjoyed at the expectation of numbering among his adherents the king of England; but he was anxious to save Anselm. Obedient, therefore, to the policy of Rome, and the example just showed him by William, he

dissembled,—promised to accede to the requests of the chaplains, but through his legate, Walter the bishop of Alba. Accompanied by this papal official, who carried the pallium from the pope, the royal messengers returned to England. They passed through Canterbury without communicating with any of the clergy, Anselm not excepted, and went straight to the king. He was satisfied, suspected nothing, believed, as he well might do, in the sincerity of the pontiff, and accepted the presence of Walter as its pledge. Accordingly he proclaimed throughout England his acknowledgment of Urban as sovereign pontiff; and then demanded from Walter the pallium, but to this the legate would not consent; it could not be expected, he said, that the pope would depose one of his best servants; nor would the pope ever have promised to do so. He was not to be moved from this decision by anything that William could do or say, not even by the annual present which William promised; he had received orders from the pope to present the pall to Anselm, his mission ended when he had done so. William had the prudence to hide the mortification he felt at this deceit, and to submit to it; he could have recalled his allegiance and driven the legate from his kingdom, but for such open hostility he was not prepared; he therefore took the other course, and permitted Walter to fulfil his commission; he invited Anselm to visit his court, and paid him marked respect. Surrounded by the nobility, who were always anxious to establish peace between these kings of the civil

and spiritual world, William and Anselm entered into a familiar conversation; during which the legate, with less good taste than a courtier would be supposed to have shown, though not without a certain jocose pertinence, repeated the opening verse of the hundred and thirty-first psalm.

The clerical advisers of the king were not so willing to lose all the advantage which the presence of the pope's legate seemed to offer; they hinted to the primate that the renewed friendship of the king was deserving of recognition by a present, and that at least the expense of the journey to Rome thus saved should be given to the king. Anselm refused, and remained firm in his determination to do nothing which should give the least appearance of venality. He refused to accept the pall from the hand of William; but demanded that since it could be placed upon him by the pope, he should be allowed to take it from the altar. His demands were conceded, and on the Sunday, the 10th of June, 1095, having presented the pallium to the lips of his suffragans, he placed it upon his shoulders. Thus, after two years and a quarter from his nomination, and nineteen months from his consecration, the election of Anselm was completed.

The seven and twenty months which had elapsed since William first called him to his bedside at Gloucester, had been, so far as the interests of the English church were concerned, wasted. The property of church tenants under the nominal rule of Anselm had not been safer than under the real

government of the Flambard. The primate respected the interests of his vassals as far as he could, but they suffered notwithstanding ; large sums were constantly demanded for buildings, expeditions, and hunting grounds. The destitution during the year of Anselm's election was unusually great, owing to the failure of the crops. His anxiety to relieve mere temporal distress, and his quarrel with the king, left him no leisure for those more special labours of the archbishop. We read of no effort during his time to provide the sons of the nobility and others with instruction ; nor any to improve the habits and morality of the people. The whole of his primatial labours may be summed up in a few sentences. He consecrated some new bishops and abbeys, and visited those monastic establishments which especially needed his care ; he carried on a correspondence with Walstan, respecting the extent to which antiquity sanctioned his official rights, and he also sent letters to the princes of Ireland and the northern islands, encouraging the latter to pursue their pious labours of building a nunnery, and offering to one O'Brien as king of Ireland some highly moral counsels on the management of his kingdom, and shortly afterwards he consecrated a monk of St. Alban's to be bishop of Dublin.

The means which Urban used to assist Anselm were certainly among the most ignoble to which ever a Christian bishop had descended ; to us they are an instance of that infidelity and untruthfulness which characterized the rule of the papacy through

so many centuries ; an indication of that moral decay which lay hidden behind the gorgeous drapery of ritualism and service : to the rude, politic men of the time they supplied an incentive to struggle and strife ; a pope employing stratagem and deceit to compass his ends, was on a level with themselves ; he had quitted the elevated station from which as supreme pontiff he ruled their consciences by the terror of the future, and had exchanged his almost supernatural weapons for the “wisdom which is not from above.” In the reign of William Rufus, however, the church was reduced by the factions among its rulers, and the insubordination of the princes of Europe, to take any means that offered themselves to increase its strength. Urban contending with Guibert,—pope with antipope for the possession of Rome—representing, almost unknown to themselves, the two principles which under one form or another were at war throughout the whole of the middle ages,—these men were eager to find and employ any means that would be likely to add to the number of their adherents, or validity to their titles. The position of Urban had never been very secure, he had not been able even to enter the city of Rome till 1089, and he obtained possession of the Lateran only by purchase five years afterwards. Even then he was not master of the city, the supporters of his rival contested with him every position ; and so successful were their efforts, that in 1095 he quitted Italy for the western side of the Alps, trusting to the churches there to acknowledge

him as pontiff and to provide for his security. If we may trust to the conjectures of his contemporaries, however, this movement was but an apparent retreat ; the confession of weakness only a part of his scheme. William of Malmsbury says, " His more secret intention was not so well known ; this was, by Boamund's advice, to excite almost the whole of Europe to undertake an expedition into Asia ; that in such a general commotion of all countries, auxiliaries might easily be engaged by whose means both Urban might obtain Rome, and Boamund, Illyria and Macedonia."* This " general commotion of all countries " is known in history as the Crusades, in which Urban gained the pre-eminence he desired, and which served to knit the monarchs of Europe once more together around the throne of the papacy.

The pretext, under which Urban and Boamund were anxious to excite the eastern expedition, was better than most of its kind. The Turks had gradually possessed themselves of Asia Minor, Syria, and Jerusalem, and had inflicted on the Christians of those places, and on the pilgrims to them, unparalleled cruelties. Many of the defenceless and aged they had butchered ; strong men they had seized for slaves, and used them as oxen bound to ploughs ; the churches they had destroyed, or used as stables. The pope crossed the Alps in July, in September he

* Malmsbury, Bohn's Ed. p. 356. Boamund was the eldest son of Robert Guiscard, who, at his death ten years before, had, through the influence of his second wife, bestowed the largest share of his kingdom on her son Roger, who then became duke of Apulia and Calabria.

was at Avignon, and early in November he was at Clermont. To this place he summoned his clergy from all parts to meet him in council, and gathered around him those who had returned from the East, and who could bear witness to the violence which was perpetrated by the followers of Mahomet. The council opened on the 18th of November, and lasted ten days. The number of ecclesiastics present is variously stated, but the account given by the pope was thirteen archbishops, two hundred and twenty-five bishops, and a great crowd of abbots, with many others of the clergy. It is not to be supposed that Urban would lose sight of the opportunity which such a gathering afforded him for striking a blow at his enemies in the church; he managed to pass several decrees which form a sort of manifesto against the imperial party, and show a strong adherence on Urban's part to the policy and opinions of Hildebrand. They declare generally that "the church should be catholic in faith and communion; pure from all contagion of sin; and independent of all secular power." The most memorable record of the Clermont council is the speech of Urban and the effect it produced. Several accounts of it have been transmitted, only three of which have the stamp of authenticity; none of them are of sufficient interest to be transcribed. The pope, we are told, delivered his address on a lofty scaffold in the market-place of Clermont; to hearers who sheltered themselves from an unusually cold November, in tents hastily erected in the streets and

* Ord. Vit., iii. 64.

fields. The duty of rescuing from pagan hands the holy places of the sacred lands, was urged upon the people by all the considerations that superstition can supply; and the potent incentive was added, that all who would bear arms in this enterprise should be absolved from past sin and future obligation. The bishop of Puy was the first convert; on his knees before the pope, in the presence of all the people, he received permission to go; Count Raymond of Toulouse soon after assumed the cross with many of his followers. Thus commenced, the desire to join the Crusade soon became a frenzy in all ranks. The superstition of the lower orders, the romantic love of excitement among the higher, found in the war of the church an object sufficient to gratify itself, an object so holy in its character that under its name robbery lost its odium, and even murder its horror.

The advantages of such an expedition were too manifold to escape the attention of the unquiet and imprudent duke of Normandy. His character as a ruler was lost; he had lost nearly all that had been given him to govern. His nobles were insubordinate and fickle, and his brother more than shared his territory with him. Henry, owing to his possession of the castle of Dampont, and his great prudence, was enabled to maintain a sort of patronage over Robert; and William had gained more than twenty castles, and the support of some of the most powerful Norman barons. But besides the helplessness of his position, which almost compelled his absence, Robert had a strong desire to become a pilgrim to the Holy

Land, arising partly from a promise he had made to his father when dying, and partly from a superstitious belief in its regenerative effects. Whatever necessity there might have been for making the promise, the time which had elapsed since it was made had certainly not diminished the necessity for its performance; and however slight may have been the estimate he had formed of the penance he deserved, we can hardly blame him for desiring to reduce its austerity by the novelties of travel and the excitement of numbers. Robert therefore immediately made preparations for setting out; he applied first to his brother William for a loan of money, which was refused with a rude message bidding him go to his friend the king of France. Robert, who was probably a less sinner than William, and certainly was a more generous one, went to the king of France and obtained a thousand pounds; whereupon William, unwilling to be outdone in generosity, or more probably having perceived the advantages which would arise to him from the absence of his brother, offered the loan of ten thousand marks on the mortgage of the duchy.

The means employed by William to levy this sum were worthy of his reign and character. He gave the order to his nobles and earls, leaving them to find the means of raising so enormous a tax. "These were very hard times to all the English," says the Saxon writer; which will be readily believed when it is known, that added to it were the expenses incurred in repelling the Welsh in the west, and

throughout all England the crops were bad. The bishops and abbots in great numbers went to court to pray the king to lessen so great an impost, but received for answer—"Have you not shrines adorned with gold and silver, full of dead men's bones?" The petitioners took the hint, and sacrificed the beauty of their churches to the rapacity of their king. Crucifixes, chalices, shrines, were robbed of their jewels and adornments, and the money was raised. Anselm contributed to this tax the sum of two hundred marks of silver; this he drew from the treasury of the cathedral on the advice of two bishops, as the purpose to which it was to be applied was at least indirectly sacred. He would not, however, allow even this to stand as a precedent for future exactions, and therefore gave up the revenues of his estate at Peckham for seven years.*

In the beginning of September, William crossed the Channel with six thousand six hundred and sixty-six pounds, for which he received the dukedom of Normandy, so long coveted and so badly used when obtained. At the close of the same month, duke Robert set out upon his pilgrimage, in company with that impenitent old sinner Odo, bishop of Bayeux, who, partly from his old love of war and adventure, and partly because he would not be subject to the government of William, his unforgiving enemy, determined to join the crusade.

The king kept the Christmas of this year in

* Hody, in his *History of Convocations*, says that this was the first time danegeld was levied on the clergy.

Normandy, and shortly before Easter returned to England. He was probably recalled by his affairs in the west counties. The Welsh constantly ravaged them, and the nobles who acted during his absence were not able to overcome them. It was his intention to have kept his court at Winchester for Easter, but being driven back to sea by bad weather, he put in at Arundel, and so travelled on to Windsor. Immediately after the festivities he started for Wales, and pushed as far as he could into the interior. He remained there nearly two months, but effected little. We have few details of these Welsh skirmishes, and such as we have are of little or no interest; an incident that arose out of them was, however, of great importance.

Among the troops levied by William for this expedition was a body of men furnished by Anselm, as feudal vassal of the king. Either the archbishop had positively not sent them out equipped in a manner accordant with the custom and fitted for the necessities of the case, or William seized upon it as a pretext for a new quarrel; but while in Wales he sent severe messages and letters to Anselm, threatening him with prosecution in his court. The primate attended his court which was held at Whitsuntide, but the cause was dropped, probably because as no state business could be heard until the feasting was over, and during that time he had proposed to the king to leave the country, William saw a greater advantage in his absence than in his prosecution. Leave was, however, not granted at

once ; three different times, extending over as many months, did Anselm request permission to leave the country for Rome. The first time he received only a sarcastic joke, and the last time he was given to understand that if he went, he would never return as archbishop. He determined to run all risks, and to go. His suffragans, especially the bishop of Winchester, sneered at his habit of referring all his proceedings to God ; and hinted to him, if he would but descend to their position, and regard things as they did, they would be glad to counsel him.

Anselm seated himself, as was his right, beside the king in the great court, and again opened the question which had been discussed at Rockingham, viz., that there was nothing inconsistent with his loyalty to the king in his fidelity to the pope. His earnestness led him some length, and brought upon him the laughter of the king and the rude jokes of his courtiers. He remained quiet, and with downcast eyes pretended not to hear the noise ; and that having subsided he left their presence, declaring that to give up his right to appeal to the pope would be to abjure Christ himself.

The next time he saw the king was to bid him farewell. It would have appeared better in itself, he told him, and would have appeared better in the eyes of all honest men, if he had given him leave to take this journey ; but since he would not, he accepted with great quietness all that concerned himself, and his interest for his salvation was not less. As

his spiritual father, as archbishop of Canterbury, etc., he offered him his benediction. The king bowed his head. Anselm made above it the sign of the cross, and went. He and William met no more after that day, October 15th, 1097.

He set out upon his journey at once, dressed in the simple garb of a pilgrim, and surrounded by a crowd of weeping monks and sorrowing poor. He arrived at Dover in company with Eadmer and Baldwin, his constant friends. He was detained there fifteen days by contrary winds, and during the whole time was watched by one of the king's party, and on the day on which he started his baggage was violently ransacked for the purpose of discovering money. Such treatment is hardly credible; but the hatred of William was deep, and his nature essentially mean.

CHAPTER VII.

ANSELM IN EXILE.

ANSELM left England October 15th, 1097, and after a voyage which in the ordinary course of things would have been far otherwise than prosperous, he reached Wissant—a port situated to the south of Boulogne. The sailors pointed out with astonishment and joy that a plank had broken in the hold of the ship, and had so left an opening of two feet, but which, thanks to the sacred presence of Anselm, the water had refused to enter.

We cannot follow Anselm through all the incidents of his travels, nor attempt to give the details left by his companion and biographer, of all the places at which he stayed, and the persons whom he met. He remained generally at monasteries, visited churches, and took part in the festivals and services of the place through which he passed. Wherever he went he was recognised as the representative of the church party, and as such received all the homage that belonged to one who had placed himself in the same rank as Hildebrand and Urban. By the duke of Burgundy, through whose territory he passed, he was treated with great respect. Three

days before Christmas he arrived at the monastery of Cluny, celebrated for the austerity of its discipline, the virtue of its abbot, and as being the early home of Hildebrand. Hugh, abbot of Cluny, was at the time of Anselm's arrival an old man; in fame he was still as great as ever, but in activity he had declined. He had entered the monastery at a very early age, while indeed a mere boy, but even then attracted the attention of his superiors, and was as prior chosen to undertake a political embassy to Germany. Shortly after his return he was elected abbot, though only three and twenty years of age, and from that time was actively engaged in all the great ecclesiastical movements of his age. The principles which Hildebrand so stoutly and vigorously maintained, in opposition to the great body of the clergy, were inculcated by him. He therefore supported the pope and his legates in all their designs. He was regarded, however, with affection, not by the papal party alone; he was beloved alike by emperor and pope; the princes of Germany all loved the abbot of Cluny; and had Hildebrand followed his advice when Henry travelled across the Alps in the winter of 1077, and granted the audience which the emperor requested, the strife between the church and the empire would probably have concluded then.

From Cluny the archbishop sent a message to Lyons, informing his friend of his arrival; in answer, he was waited upon by one of the suffragans of the archbishop of Lyons, and by him conducted to Hugh-

One in name and in purpose with the abbot of Cluny, the archbishop of Lyons yet differed considerably from him in the constancy and self-denial with which his purposes were carried out. He was originally a monk of Cluny, and had received all the honours which the church could bestow upon its servants, short of the papacy itself. Under Gregory VII. he became papal legate in France, and in that office distinguished himself by his thorough sympathy with the plans and prospects of the ecclesiastical party. His zeal was too great even for Hildebrand, whose prudence seldom forsook him, and who wrote to Hugh, begging him to deal more mercifully with such of the clergy as came before him for violation of canonical rules. His rashness was not to be checked; for, having called a council, which prelates of Normandy, either being unable or not wishing, did not attend, he suspended them from their functions. Gregory was again obliged to interfere, and to reinstate the bishops, telling Hugh not to irritate the duke of Normandy by measures so hasty and arbitrary. This rude energy, nevertheless, secured for him the favour of Gregory, and the confidence of his partisans; and he had the honour of being one of three who were nominated as worthy to be the successors of Hildebrand. The honour of succession fell to Desiderius, and the disappointment which Hugh evidently felt, showed that ambition was not the least element in his character. He scandalized the new pope in letters to the duchess of Tuscany, the loved friend of Gregory,

and brought upon himself the excommunication of Victor by attempting to organize a schism against him. Fortunately for him Victor died, and Urban his successor was possessed of sufficient policy to remove his predecessor's ban, and so bring back the prelate to obedience to the see. Hugh was reconciled to his former friends, but received a severe rebuke from the abbot of Cluny, and what probably hurt his pride more sorely, was insulted by the monks of the same monastery. By Urban he was reinstated a cardinal legate, and was one of those who had attended the council of Clermont the year previous to Anselm's arrival.

He had become principally acquainted with Anselm in the year 1095, owing to the correspondence that had passed between them respecting the affairs of the English church. Anselm had a high opinion of his judgment and sagacity, and looked with some hope to his support. He was compelled to remain at Lyons, owing to the weak state of his health; and while there he wrote to the pope, announcing his approaching arrival, and recounting all he had suffered in England. The delay to which he was subjected proved useful, as he afterwards discovered that the antipope, who was master of the road, had set ambushes to seize him, and who, learning from the pilgrims going to Rome of his illness, ceased to watch for him when he really went forward.*

He left Lyons, habited simply as a monk, and accompanied by his two friends Baldwin and Eadmer,

* *Histoire Lit.*, tom. ix.

on the 17th of March, 1098. Wherever he went he found himself expected; the monks belonging to the different monasteries where they stopped, inquired of the three travellers whether they knew where the archbishop of Canterbury was. Eadmer and Baldwin generally managed to deceive the querists, and so, in addition to the disguise in which they appeared, they passed generally undetected.

He arrived at Rome, and was welcomed by the pope with undisguised affection. He entertained him ten days as his guest at the Lateran. His formal introduction to the nobility took place the day after his arrival. On his entrance he threw himself at the feet of the pope, who, raising him, embraced him as his friend, and complimented him amid the applause of the courtiers. He rendered homage to his great talents,—called him his equal—a venerable patriarch—the pope of another world. Requested by the pope, he explained the cause of his journey. He was assured of the protection of the pope, who begged him to stay with him to await the results of the negotiation proposed with Rufus. Anselm did not remain long with the pope, but sought an asylum at the monastery of St. Saviour, the abbot of which, though a Roman, had been formerly a monk of Bec. Afterwards, to avoid the heat of the plains, he removed to a house situated among the mountains in the Terra del Lavoro. As soon as he had breathed the air of this solitude he exclaimed, “Here is repose for me.” He employed himself by finishing his work, “Cur Deus Homo,”

that he had commenced in England. A work that contributed more to his fame was, that he assisted the monks in finding a spot where they could most profitably dig a well. Repeating a prayer, and striking the ground three times, he ordered them to dig there. They dug, and in a few days found the water. One of his biographers says that it was known as the well of the archbishop of Canterbury. It existed as late as 1640.

Duke Roger, second son of Robert Guiscard, laid siege to Capua in the spring of 1098, and finding that Anselm was in the neighbourhood, he begged him to come to his camp. He went, and was heartily welcomed. The pope arrived soon after him, and lived in a tent near him till the end of the siege. Roger's uncle Roger brought a number of Saracens to Anselm for conversion—a task in which the archbishop succeeded. These Saracen pagans had been found in the island when Robert Guiscard took it. We have already recounted (*Life of Lanfranc*) the relation of Guiscard to the holy see.

On the 1st of October, 1098, Urban held the famous council of Bari, at which he invited Anselm to be present. The body of St. Nicholas was at Bari, and in the church named after him the council was held. One hundred and eighty-three bishops were present.

The business with which the council was occupied was matters of faith. Anselm spoke on none of the subjects which were considered, except the heresy of the Greek church. One of the questions was

whether the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father alone. The pope opposed to the Greeks many arguments, drawn principally from the work Anselm had addressed to him on the incarnation of the Word. He was not, however, very successful, and in despair of overcoming his opponents, he sensibly called for the author of the treatise. "Father and Master Anselm, archbishop of the English, where art thou?" He was seated in his rank among the bishops. He immediately rose. "Why dost thou remain silent? Come and defend thy mother and ours." A disturbance arose around the pope by the anxiety of the bishops to find accommodation for the speaker, who was introduced by the pope with an account of his suffering and exile. As he was about to speak, he was requested to postpone to the next day what he had to say, in order that he might address an audience less fatigued. Accordingly, the next day he delivered an oration, which, carefully revised, became a theological manual. He established his point by an appeal to the Scriptures to meet his opponents, who refused the authority of the Latin Fathers. He obtained the applause of all. At the conclusion of the address the pope cried out, "Blessed be thy heart and thy mouth, and the words of thy mouth."

The pope then repeated to the assembled bishops the circumstances that had led to Anselm's exile; and concluded by demanding of the audience what ought to be the discipline of the church. All cried out for excommunication, but Anselm threw himself

at the feet of the pope, and begged him not to pronounce the sentence which all demanded ; he had great trouble to prevail.

About this time arrived the messenger from England, bringing William's reply to the letters of Anselm and the pope. He reported that William had received both, but refused to read Anselm's ; and had threatened to tear out the eyes of the messenger if he did not instantly quit the kingdom. This messenger was followed by another, William de Warlewast, who was sent by the king. He carried the answer of William to the pontifical letter, and defended the king for seizing the lands of the archbishopric, by saying that he had unequivocally threatened to do so if Anselm left, and he had kept his word. The pope inquired if it was possible he had come so far to tell him that the king had acted so, as a punishment for Anselm for not having renounced his intention to visit the holy see. The king must restore all the episcopal wealth if he would not be excommunicated. He gave him three months to consider. The English envoy did not depart directly ; he scattered widely and profusely presents and promises. He begged for a private interview with the pope, and though what passed is not known, the result was that grace was allowed until September, which gave nine months instead of three for the answer of William. The next three months of Anselm's stay at Rome were spent in the company of the pope and the nobles. He held the second rank, and acted for the pope in many ceremonies.

The next council was held at Rome in the third week of Easter. There were present one hundred and fifty bishops from Gaul and Italy. The council was held in the church of St. Peter. The attendants were so numerous that the church was full, and the noise was so great that the decrees could not be heard when read. The pope therefore appointed the bishop of Lucca, as he was tall and loud of voice, to place himself in the midst of the council, and to announce the decisions. He had commenced reading, when he suddenly ceased, and changing countenance he cried out, "What are we doing? We overwhelm the obedient with directions and regulations, and yet do not resist the tyrants. Their cruelty, their acts of oppression and spoliation, are each day denounced to the holy see, and from it we seek counsel and assistance. But of the result the world knows and grieves. There is here from the most distant country a man humble and silent, and his silence cries out; his humility exalts him. Cruelly persecuted, unjustly despoiled, he is here as a suppliant, soliciting the apostolic justice. Already two years have passed, and what succour has he gained from us? If you do not know him of whom I speak, it is Anselm of England." So he spoke, and with closed teeth, scarcely containing his indignation, he struck the pavement with his pastoral staff. The pope promised to arrange the whole thing wisely.

The decrees were read, and the business was proceeded with. Many were repealed, others made,

especially those which related to investitures; and excommunication pronounced against all those who should do homage for any ecclesiastical dignity, or should become tributary to any of the laity. A general exclamation of *fiat* (be it so) hailed these decrees.

Anselm had heard the bold and unexpected demand of the bishop of Lucca with less astonishment than acquiescence; he had felt that the private interview of William's agent could do him no good, not even the virtue of Urban might be proof against English gold, and the delay that occurred showed that he was abandoned by the pontiff. Under these circumstances he asked and obtained leave to return to France.

To travel from Rome to Lyons was attended with as much difficulty for a leading prelate in the papacy of Urban II., as for an enemy of Austria to travel the same journey now. Guibert, the rival pope, being driven from Rome, sought to revenge himself by seizing all those who were the friends of Urban. He held several fortresses along the banks of the Po. Anselm had fortunately avoided him on his way from Lyons to Rome; but Guibert had obtained during his stay in Italy a portrait of him, by which he hoped that his vassals would recognise him. He escaped, however, all harm. Under the protection of the Count of Savoy he passed through Piedmont.

He occupied his time at Lyons as before, preaching sermons, consecrating churches, visiting monasteries and churches, and doing acts of kindness which the

credulity of the people or the dishonesty of his biographers have exalted into miracles.

Here he wrote a continuation of his tract on the Incarnation, which he called the Conception of the Virgin and Original Sin. He also gave to his friends at this time a volume of Meditations on the Redemption of Man; and at Cluny he delivered a sermon, a report of which has been preserved by Eadmer, in a book called the Blessedness of the Celestial World.

On the 29th of July, 1099, died pope Urban, who had filled the see little more than eleven years. As the successor of Hildebrand, he attempted to carry out his schemes, but he was neither possessed of his courage nor his virtue. The following sentences could certainly only have been written by a friend mourning his loss, and can only be tolerated by remembering that their subject was dead:—"He was neither swayed by the wealth of the rich, nor elated by praises and fame, nor terrified by the threats of the powerful. His tongue was remarkable for eloquence, his heart for wisdom, his conduct for worth, his carriage for dignity." These words were written by his friend Peter Leo; to his house he went after the council of Bari, and there died.

Urban was succeeded by Rainier, a Tuscan by birth, a monk of Cluny by education. He had attracted the attention of Gregory VII., and was by him admitted to the sacred college. He was consecrated on the 14th of August under the name of Pascal II. Anselm wrote to him to pay his

respects, and to explain his position ; he begged that the king of England might not be excommunicated, but enlightened. The pope probably replied to this letter, but nothing was definitely done, and Anselm had nothing left but to wait. His friend Hugh of Lyons was making preparations to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and at a council he held for the purpose of supplies and authority, Anselm was present.

Everything was at the time apparently opposed to his interests. When happening to be at the abbey of Chaise-dieu in Auvergne, he received from two monks, one of Bec, the other of Canterbury, the news of William's death. If we were to believe the historians of the time, we should say this was not the first intimation he had received of this event. We are told that, being one day at Marcigny, he was informed by abbot Hugh of Cluny, that he had the night before dreamt that the king of England had been brought to the throne of God, and that all the wrongs of the English church had been avenged. He had seen the saints in great numbers making their complaints, and he had heard the Most High say, "Approach, put others by of the English, and avenge thyself on the tyrant," and then gave an arrow of fire to St. Alban, who threw it upon the ground, saying to Satan, "Receive all power against him."

In England the presages were not less striking, and much more frequent. Like Cæsar, William had both an Artemidorus and a soothsayer, but like him he refused to be warned. His Artemidorus was

Robert Fitz-Hamon, one of the principal nobility, who was told by a "foreign monk that he had dreamed a strange and fearful dream about the king ; that he had come into a certain church, with menacing and insolent gesture, as was his custom, looking contemptuously on the standers by ; then violently seizing the crucifix, he gnawed the arms and almost tore away the legs ; that the image endured this for a long time, but at length struck the king with its foot in such a manner that he fell backwards ; from his mouth, as he lay prostrate, issued so copious a flame, that the volumes of smoke touched the very stars." William laughed at the story, and replied, " He is a monk, and dreams for money like a monk : give him a hundred shillings."*

Serlo, abbot of St. Peter's, Gloucester, also wrote to the king, giving him a very distinct account of a dream which one of his monks had had.

The letter of Serlo reached the king on the morning of the 2nd of August, 1100, when, surrounded by his courtiers, he was preparing to start for the New Forest. William of Malmsbury says he had refrained from going out before dinner, imputing his delay to fear and the remonstrances of his friends, but that having regaled himself with an unusual quantity of wine, he was in high spirits. He joked with his attendants while they laced his boots, and with his armourer about the arrows ; and of the six presented to him he took but four, handing the other two to Walter Tirel, saying, " The sharpest

* William of Malmsbury.

arrows should be given to him who knows best how to inflict mortal wounds with them." Having read Serlo's letter, he burst out laughing, and exclaimed, "I wonder what has induced my Lord Serlo to write to me in this strain, for I really believe he is a worthy abbot, and a respectable old man. In the simplicity of his heart he transmits to me, who have enough besides to attend to, the dreams of his snoring monks, and even takes the trouble to commit them to writing and send them a long distance. Does he think that I follow the example of the English, who will defer their journey or their business, on account of the dreams of a parcel of wheezing old women?"

It is thus history descends to gossip respecting the last hours of William. Little of all that has been written respecting this event can be depended upon; but tradition, speaking through the chroniclers, is unanimous in declaring that he died pierced by the arrow of Walter Tirel. More than one of them tell us, that feverish with wine and in unusually good spirits, William set out surrounded by his first Lords, Henry his brother, William de Breteil son of the great Fitz-Osbern, and Walter Tirel de Poix. They reached the forest, and the party broke into smaller companies; he and Tirel remained alone in one part of the forest "watching for the coming of game," suddenly a stag rushed between them, and the king quitting his post let fly an arrow; it grazed the animal's back, and he shading his eyes from the strong rays of the declining sun, watched the flying

stag. Walter seeing another stag pass by, shot his arrow with more rapidity than aim, and pierced the king. He uttered not a word, but breaking off the shaft, fell upon the weapon in his body, and died immediately. Walter satisfied himself that the king was really dead, and fled.* All was confusion. Henry hurried as fast as his horse would carry him to Winchester to obtain possession of the treasures; De Breuil, guessing whither he had gone, hurried after him to oppose his demand; angry words sprung up between them, and Henry drawing his sword declared no foreigner should lay hands on his father's sceptre. Crowds flocked round to hear the cause of quarrel, and through the intervention of friends De Breuil's wrath abated. Henry gained his point, and the keys.

In the meantime the body of the king lay bleeding in the forest; not one of those who had gone merrily from the palace with him that morning had stayed to see his corpse conveyed in decency to Winchester. "Like a wild boar pierced by the hunters,"† it was conveyed in the cart of a charcoal burner from the forest, and some of those poor timid monks, whose living he had oppressed and avenged, formed a procession with the mendicants and widows of Winchester to meet the body. Some of the nobility joined the procession. Respecting the royal dignity, they buried the body with honour in the court of the castle, but none wept. The wickedest believed his death

* The above account is chiefly by Malmsbury. Ordericus says, he and Walter were not alone, that others were with them, and that Walter's arrow grazing the grizzly back of a stag glanced at the king.

† Ordericus.

deserved, and the religious believed it a judgment of heaven. By the people generally the event was received with joy. Those who suffered from the game laws of the Norman kings, noted with delight that this was the third of the Conqueror's family that had fallen in the New Forest. William I. had laid waste more than sixty parishes to obtain space for hunting. Then the people of Gloucester remembered how the oldest monk in their monastery had preached on the feast of St. Peter-in-vinculis, on the wrongs of England, and had then told them that the bow of vengeance was bent, and the swift arrow taken from the quiver was ready to wound. The people of Winchester marked how that part of the building wherein lay the body of William fell to the ground. The monk who buried him for pity hesitated not to pass sentence upon him, and granted no absolution to one who had lived as he had done. William was in the thirteenth year of his reign when he died, and a little over forty years of age. In appearance "he was well set; his complexion florid, his hair yellow; of open countenance; dilt-coloured eyes, varying with certain glittering specks of astonishing strength, though not very tall; of no eloquence."* On the day he died, he held, besides the archbishopric of Canterbury and the bishoprics of Salisbury and Winchester, eleven abbeys which he had farmed.

Henry allowed no time to elapse before completing all his plans. His brother died on the Thursday;

* W. Malmsbury. For an argument against the generally received account of William's death by Tirl's arrow, see Dr. Lingard's History.

on the same day he gained possession of the treasures at Winchester; on the next day the "Witan who were then near at hand" chose him as king; on the Sunday, he having sworn at the altar, before God and all the people, to govern in equity and to remove the injustice of his brother, received the homage of the assembled prelates, and was consecrated by the bishop of London. The clergy welcomed him; they trusted him rather than submit to the duke of Normandy, who had gained an unenviable reputation for rapacity and extortion. Henry sought to deserve and retain their esteem by at once filling the vacant bishopric of Winchester, and by sending for Anselm to return. The people welcomed him as one born in their own land, as having therefore a certain kindred to them as a nation; and the lavish promises he made them gave him a high place in their esteem. "He remitted taxes, released prisoners, drove the flagitious from court, restored the nightly use of lights within the palace which had been omitted in his brother's time, and renewed the operation of the ancient laws, confirming them with his own oath, and that of the nobility, that they might not be eluded."

Thierry says, on the authority of Matthew Paris, that Henry convened the chief persons of the national party, and addressed to them, by means of an interpreter, the following speech: "My friends and faithful subjects, natives of this land in which I also was born, you know well that my brother seeks my kingdom. He is a proud man, who knows not how to live in peace; he manifestly contemns you, he

calls you cowards and gluttons, and desires only to trample you under foot. But I, like a mild and peaceful king, purpose to maintain your ancient liberties, and to govern you after your own wishes, with moderation and wisdom. I will, if you desire it, sign a writing to this effect, and will confirm it by oath. Stand by me, then, faithfully ; for if English valour second me, I fear not the vain threats of the Normans." This declaration was, as Henry proposed, drawn up and put into the form of a charter, as many copies were "made as there are counties in England, and by the king's order they were placed in the abbeys of each county for a memorial." Roger of Wendover gives the copy of the one deposited at St. Alban's in Hertfordshire, signed by three bishops, and many earls. It is addressed to Hugh de Bocland, sheriff. The king promises, first, neither to sell nor let out to farm the lands of any church when without a pastor ; secondly, repeals many of the fees charged in feudal customs for redemption of lands upon the death of the owner, and upon the marriage of daughter and widow ; thirdly, regulates money in common use ; fourthly, decrees that barons and others are not to pay mere forfeitures for wrong done, but to make atonement ; and, fifthly, that knights and others shall have their fees remitted, to allow of their spending more in horses and arms for practice, so as to be ready to defend the kingdom.

Further, Henry cast Ralph the Flambard into the Tower. No act could have rendered Henry more

popular than this with the clergy. Flambard had, up to the death of the king, been his constant adviser; he obtained the bishopric of Durham little more than a year before the death of his patron. Henry had private wrongs to avenge upon Flambard, besides the mere execution of public justice. He was committed to the care and irons of William de Magnaville early in the same month of September, the exact date is not known. Spite of his known vices, and his abominable selfishness, Ralph had qualities that always preserve a man friends,—his humour was constant, his wit sparkling, and his speech ready. By prison regulations he was allowed three shillings per day, which, according to Thierry, would now be worth thirty shillings a week—there being the weight of three of our shillings in one of theirs. This certainly was a good allowance, but it was not all he had; his friends supplied many luxuries, so that “he fared sumptuously for a prisoner, and kept daily a splendid table for himself and his keepers,” says Ordericus Vitalis. The ingenuity which had so often raised money for William did not desert the chancellor now. He was not in the Tower five months. “One day a cord was brought to the bishop in a flagon of wine, and causing a plentiful banquet to be served, the guards having partaken of it in his company, washed it down with Falernian cups, in the highest spirits. Having intoxicated them to such a degree that they slept soundly, the bishop secured the cord to a mullion in the centre of the Tower window, and catching up his pastoral staff,

began to lower himself by means of the cord. But now having forgotten to put on gloves, his hands were excoriated to the bone by the rough cord, and as it did not reach the ground the portly bishop fell, and being much bruised, groaned piteously. Faithful friends and tried followers were waiting at the foot of the Tower, where they had swift horses in readiness for him, though they were in great terror. Having mounted on horseback with them, they fled with the utmost speed; and escorted by his trusty companions, who had charge of his treasure, he lost no time in hastening on shipboard; and crossing over to Normandy, presented himself to Duke Robert.”*

Anselm was at the abbey of Chaise-dieu in Auvergne when the news reached him of the death of William. He returned at once to Lyons, and, by the advice of the archbishop, determined to return to England at the request of the English clergy. He had not reached Cluny when another messenger arrived from England, this time from the king and nobles, praying for his immediate return. The letter he received from Henry apologized for the absence of money and an escort, but promised to meet him at Dover. Anselm hastened forwards, and arrived at Dover Sept. 23, 1100. The three years Anselm had been away from England had not tended to render his disposition more pliable, or his will less firm; he had left his primacy owing to the impossibility of obtaining the free exercise of ecclesiastical right and discipline;

* Ord. Vit., Book x., ch. xviii.

and the people with whom he had moved in France and Italy had honoured him as a martyr to clerical consistency. They had constantly regarded it as a rule, that the spiritual power must be superior to the civil; that in every question of dispute the king must give way to the bishop. In the reign of William, Anselm had unhesitatingly done homage for the lands of the primacy, but in Italy he had heard the practice of investiture denounced as irreligious and infamous. This exile was most unfortunate for Anselm and England in this respect. He returned only to renew a quarrel with Henry which had been commenced with William, and to dispute with violence and virulence upon a subject which had no right to be dealt with in specific instances. The question was one of principle,—a principle that was almost universally recognised, that had descended from the time of Charlemagne, which Lanfranc had not attempted to evade, and which Gregory felt it safer, in certain instances, to leave alone.

Henry, in meeting with his primate, apologized for not having waited for his arrival for consecration, but alleged the exigencies of his political position. The question of homage arose instantly between them, and Anselm at once refused to renew to Henry the homage he had given to William. The position of the king was of a critical character. Robert and Anselm had arrived at the same time—Anselm in England, Robert from the Crusade in Normandy. He had earned the affection of the church by his expedition, and was regarded by many of the nobility

as the heir to the throne. To enter into dispute with the primate then would have been to throw away the support of the clergy in the coming struggle, and to have given Robert the moral influence belonging to the pope. He therefore postponed the matter, and promised Anselm to send a deputation to Rome respecting it. Anselm, on his side, wrote to the pope, begging his support, direction, and authority. The pope did not immediately reply, but left Anselm to arrange his affairs as he thought fit. He was as a friend said of him—the Augustine of England, without there being a Gregory at Rome.

Henry is said to have declared, when he promised to govern by the laws of Edward the Confessor, that he could afford to dispense with the support of the Normans if he were sure of that of the Saxons. In a similar spirit we suppose he determined to choose a Saxon wife. Nothing that he could have done would have tended so much to his popularity as this among the English, and no woman could he have chosen so much to the popular taste as Matilda, daughter of Malcolm III., that unfortunate monarch of whom we spoke in the reign of William Rufus, whose life had been spent in defending the honour of his Saxon relatives, and whose death was occasioned by avenging his own. He had two daughters, Edith and Mary, brought up under the pious influence of their mother Margaret, and Furgot her confessor. The former, Edith, was afterwards called Matilda Maud. Miss Strickland says that they did not enter a monastery till after their parents' death, when the Saxon exiles

were ordered to quit the Scottish court ; but Ordericus says,* that Margaret “entrusted her two daughters Edith and Mary to her sister Christina, a nun of the abbey of Romsey, to be brought up and instructed in sacred learning.” The abbess afterwards removed from Romsey to Wilton, taking her nieces with her ; Wilton abbey, founded by Alfred, had always been the place for the education of Saxon princesses. The wife of Edward the Confessor had rebuilt it from wood into stone. Edith, or Maud, inherited all her mother’s piety and popularity. Her character is spoken of as “singularly holy”—but her beauty as only “by no means despicable.” Such as it was, however, it procured her many suitors—Alan the Red Count of Brittany, and William de Warenne, Earl of Surrey, sought her hand ; and it is said by Eadmer that Henry himself had been a suitor previous to his becoming king. The first died, the second married Elizabeth de Vermandois, and the third awaited merely an opinion twice before he pressed his suit.

The precise motives which led Henry to desire this engagement it is rather difficult to discover. To suppose it was wholly on account of the purity and piety of the lady’s character, is to give him credit for more sympathy with such qualities than he ever manifested ; and to allege as a cause his policy, which was to strengthen himself with the Saxon natives, even at

* Besides, Miss Agnes Strickland is not consistent. She says that Maud was at Wilton seven years. How then could she have entered a nunnery at the time of Duncan’s reign, which was 1094 ?

the risk of losing his popularity among the Normans, would be perhaps to impute to him a greater foresight and policy than his other acts would entitle him to. His character has been sketched by several contemporary pens, and generally in the most laudatory terms. William of Malmsbury exhausts his ready eloquence in praise of a king "whose mother bore him to be a commander, not a soldier;" who abstained "from war as far as he could with honour; but when he had determined no longer to forbear, a most severe requiter of injuries, dissipating every opposing danger by the energy of his courage; contending by counsel rather than by the sword. If he could, he conquered without bloodshed; if it was unavoidable, with as little as possible;" "inflexible in the administration of justice"—"ruling the people with moderation, the nobility with condescension."

The Saxon Chronicle says briefly of him, "He was a good man, and great was the awe of him; no man durst ill-treat another in his time; he made peace for men and deer."

Henry of Huntingdon, who was by far the keenest of the chroniclers of this period, has left us two descriptions of the king; first, that which answers to the common talk of the people of the time, and his own belief based on the facts he knew. He is, however, correct in nothing so much as this, that whatever king Henry may have been or done, he and his acts appeared light and beauty itself compared to the darkness which followed in the sad

times of Stephen. He came between two bad kings. Rufus had been blackened by vices which would have disgraced a serf among serfs, and cruelties which would have turned the stomach of Brian de Bois Guilbert's Saracens; he had been surrounded by men who had added to political crimes personal infamy, and by women who had converted the palace "from the abode of majesty to the stews of paltries."* The reputation which Henry obtained from repressing the vices he found, and dismissing the servants of such a court, was cheaply earned. Besides, he had learnt wisdom from misfortune. The circumstances in which he had lived had taught him self-reliance and caution, his purposes he had to conceal, and to learn to act with rapidity. He had managed, too, to gain a reputation for learning, which would probably have given him a second rank among the clerks of a monastery.

There are two reasons for thinking Henry's marriage was a necessity rather than choice; first, he was regarded with suspicion by the Norman nobles for having gained the throne from his brother; secondly, the repeated assertion that Matilda was reluctant to the match, and that the suspected Henry was not so free from licentiousness as was represented—both of which statements are borne out by her subsequent conduct.

Henry wrote to Anselm, when at Lyons, begging him to decide this case before he returned, but Anselm would not, considering it too important;

* Malmsbury.

and postponed it till he could hear it at Lambeth. At the council held there, Anselm stated the objections to the marriage, and the prevailing report that Matilda had embraced a nun's life. She said, or is reported to have said—for there are differing accounts—that she had worn the veil to avoid the fury of the Norman soldier.* Two archdeacons were heard who

* “Grave Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, espous'd and married Maud (daughter of Maleolm, king of the Scots, and St. Margaret his wife) to Henry king of England. She had been a profess'd votary, and was press'd, by the importunity of her parents and friends, for politic ends, to this marriage, inasmuch as, in the bitterness of her soul, (able to appal the writer hereof, seeing his ink out-black'd with her expression,) she devoted the fruit of her body to the devil, because they would not permit her to perform her promise of virginity :

“Thus Matthew Paris. But the reader reserveth his other ear for the relation of Eadmerus, reporting this story after a different, yea, contrary manner, as followeth :—The aforesaid Maud, when a girl, liv'd under the tuition and correction of Christian her aunt, and abbess of Wilton, at what time the Norman soldiers, conquering the kingdom, did much destroy and more endanger virgins by their violence. Christian, therefore, to preserve this her niece, clapp'd a black cloth on her head, in imitation of a nun's vail, which she unwillingly wore in the presence of her aunt, but in her absenee off it went, from above her head to under her heels, so that in despiteful manner she used to tread and trample upon it, yea, if Maleolm her father chane'd to behold her wearing that moek vail, with rage he would rend it off, cursing the causers of it, and avowing that he intended her no votary, but a wife to Count Alan, Besides, two grave archdeacons, sent down to Wilton to inquire into the matter, reported that for aught they could learn from the nuns there, this Maud was never solemnly entered into their order. Hereupon a council was called of the English clergy, wherein some grave men attested of their own knowledge that at the Norman conquest, to avoid the fury of the soldiery, many maids out of fear, not affection, for protection, not piety, made a cloister their refuge, not their choicce ; were nuns in their own defence, running their heads, but without their hearts, into a vail. And in this case it was resolv'd by learned Lanfranc, that such virgins were bound, by an extraordinary obligation, above other women,

“ *Debitam castitati reverentiam exhibere*

Nullam religionis continentiam servare ;

N

had been to Wilton and questioned all the sisters and the abbess, and who reported that she had been confided to his care by her mother,—that she had never worn the veil, until one day the king William came to the door of the convent, and had already got from his horse when the abbess thought of the beauty of her mien and the unscrupulousness of the king. She instantly threw a black veil over her head, and introduced her to William. As soon as he saw the veil he set off again, evidently showing with what purpose he had come. The summing up, which was by the president of the council—Anselm having retired that he might have no influence in the decision—was, that a distinction was to be made between those ladies who had voluntarily chosen a monastic seclusion, and those who had been compelled to observe its rules for temporary purposes. He cited the authority of Lanfranc, who had decided similarly; and he ruled that the case of Maud fell under this latter class. Accordingly, Henry and Edith, now called Maud, were to be married. The ceremony took place in the church of Westminster, to which the wealth and energy of Rufus had added

which is, in effect, that they must be chaste wives, though they need not be constant maids. These things alleg'd and prov'd, Anselm pronounced the nunship of Maud of none effect, and solemnly married her to king Henry. However, some infer the unlawfulness of this match from the unhappiness of their children—all their issue male coming to untimely deaths. But sad events may sometimes be improved by men's censures further than they were intended by God's justice; and it is more wisdom seriously to observe them to the instructing of ourselves, than rigidly to apply them to the condemning of others; the rather because Maud, the empress, their sole surviving child, seemed by her happiness to make reparation for the infelicity of the rest."—*Fuller's History*.

the Great Hall. Anselm mounted on a pulpit, and gave the people who were present a history of the whole affair, all that had taken place before the synod, and the results. He then demanded with a loud voice if any objected. He was answered with a great shout; and so the lady was married to the king on St. Martin's day, Sunday, Nov. 11, 1100. Mr. Macaulay says it "was regarded as a marriage between a white planter and a quadroon girl would now be regarded in Virginia." This seems a little too strong, but there is no doubt the nobility characterized it as sarcastically as they could—a marriage which was perhaps less detestable for its origin than for the sobriety it introduced to the palace. Only five nobles are spoken of as being on Henry's side; the others "either secretly sent for Robert to make him king, or openly branded their lord with sarcasms, calling him Godric, and his consort Godiva."* Henry heard and laughed; he hoped to answer shortly the jeer with a blow. The Saxons were enthusiastic in this marriage; they saw not only the daughter of Alfred on the throne, but the piety of the Atheling's sister in the palace. They called her "Mold, the Good-Quene;" and she strove to deserve the epithet by works of charity and humility. She had a habit of walking barefoot through the church in Lent, and of washing and feeding beggars; and a great weakness it would appear "for clerks of

* "Godric implies God's kingdom or government. Godiva is the name 'of the wife of that grim earl' who a 'thousand summers back' 'rode forth clothed on with chastity, . . . round whom 'the deep air listened as she rode, and all the low wind hardly breathed for fear.'"—*Tennyson*.

melodious voices” whom she would fee somewhat extravagantly.

Robert, as has been mentioned, returned to Normandy in September. He came back the richer by a wife, and entered upon his duchy without opposition. His journey to Jerusalem, if it had removed his former sins, had not altered his nature or strengthened his will. His return was hailed by the continental barons, because they expected his rule would be less strict than his brother’s, and because they hoped to gain something from his reckless generosity. They were not disappointed. Instead of remaining satisfied with the dominion of Normandy, his vanity was excited by the flatteries of those nobles who had everything to gain from his attempt if successful, and nothing to lose. His party was soon joined by Ralph, who, upon escaping from the tower, hastened to try his fortune with Robert, by whom he was welcomed; his industry being of service to a prince who was almost too indolent to avail himself of his counsels. Ralph used all his efforts to exasperate the duke against his brother, and to stir up a war. Henry was not, however, without adherents upon the south side of the channel; the clergy as a body clung to him—his they believed was the side of order and justice; and many of the nobility sent messages to him begging him to obtain the duchy of Normandy as well as the kingdom of England. Robert gained no friends, either among clergy or nobility, that were worth anything. He angered the first by giving to

the horrible Robert de Belèscue the bishopric of Seèz, and he disgusted all by promises which it was obvious he would never keep. It was certainly easy for a man who “having so wasted his means, that, in spite of the wealth of his wide duchy, he was often penniless, and so much in want of clothes, that he lay in bed till twelve o’clock, and could not go to church to hear mass because he had nothing to wear.” *

Henry, on his side, took all the precaution of a wise prince. He obtained the favour of Anselm, who took every opportunity of showing the king that his opposition to him on the question of investiture was one of principle, not personal—who gave him his support, and even stood surety for him to the barons of his party that the king would keep his word, and not revoke the liberties he had promised. The native English were arranged entirely on Henry’s side—in fact, without them he could have done nothing. “He sent out ships,” says the Saxon Chronicle, “to annoy and hinder his brother; but some of them failed at time of need, and deserted from the king and submitted to Earl Robert. At midsummer the king posted himself with all his troops at Pevensey to oppose his brother; and he waited for him there.” Robert, however, did not land near that place, but made for Portsmouth. Henry, hearing of this, marched hastily towards that point, encouraging his soldiers, going in and out of the ranks instructing his English recruits how to

* Order. Vitalis, book x., ch. xviii.

ward off the blows of their adversaries and the heavy charges of the cavalry. Robert landed July 19th; shortly after the two armies met upon a "certain level tract." Envoys were sent backwards and forwards—Robert answering to the demand of why he had come, that he had come to claim the kingdom of his father as his own by right of birth. Henry soon discovered that the envoys coloured the messages that he sent and received, according to their own wishes; and knowing the impulsiveness of his brother, he requested an audience; "and on their meeting both felt the gentle influence of brotherly affection. Their numerous troops formed a magnificent circle round them, displaying the terrible but brilliant spectacle of the Normans and English under arms. The two brothers met unattended in the centre, and conversed together in the presence of the troops." The result of the conference was that Robert disbanded his troops, returning from the battle-ground to Henry's palace, no longer having the hope of becoming a king, but richer by three thousand marks a year; "but which the very next year he cheerfully surrendered to the queen's pleasure, because she desired it." Henry was as perfect in dissembling, as Robert in generosity. He allowed his brother to stay two months, but as soon as he had left England he fined all the barons who had leagued against him—some he besieged in their castles, and some he exiled. Among the last was the once suitor of his wife, the Earl of Surrey, who carried to Robert the complaint that through

love to him he had lost an estate worth a thousand silver pounds a year. Robert came over to remonstrate with Henry for his breach of faith. He discovered, however, that it would not be safe for him to remain here, for Henry could ill conceal the rage he felt; they met smilingly, but Robert gained nothing by his journey save a reprimand for his loose government and the reinstallment of Earl Surrey; and he lost the three thousand marks of silver, owing to his sister-in-law's smiles.

CHAPTER VIII.

INVESTITURES.

THE time which had been agreed upon between Anselm and the king had expired at Easter; but nothing had been done on either side. The many services which Anselm had rendered to the king,—especially the opposition which he had exhibited to the schemes of Robert, while it was rumoured that the pope was somewhat favourable to them,—and the many ways in which his services were needed, were sufficient to keep the mind of Henry quiet. The king evidently had a high opinion of the talent and integrity of the primate, and he in his turn seems to have felt no inconsiderable respect for the king; but it was just as evident that Henry, in proportion as he took a higher view of his prerogatives than his brother William had done, just so would he hold them with a tighter grasp. The reply he received from Paschal, was not calculated to weaken his resolution, but rather to excite his pride, and so add obstinacy to principle. It was a model of ecclesiastical diplomacy; apparently moderate in its demand, and certainly kind in its manner, it

contained an imposing array of citations from men and books whose names would be likely to influence the mind of the king; with such judicious commentaries and observations as gave the particular application needed. The affection of the bishop for the king was occasionally shadowed by the influence of the pope,—mingled with enticing words were the covert threats, that not for nothing did the minister of God bear the sword.

Anselm had received no reply from the pope, but the letter read to him by order of the king showed him the estimation in which his services were held at Rome. The scene now was little different from those that occurred at the court of Rufus,—a resolute king surrounded by violent partisans, a determined archbishop strong in the belief that the interests of the church were committed to his care, and ready to go into exile for them. Anselm, seeing no prospect of a termination, retired from court; when one day he received letters from the king begging his return, where it was determined in conference, held at Winchester, that ambassadors should be sent to declare to the pope, that “if he persisted to deny the king’s right to investiture and homage, they would drive Anselm out of the kingdom, withdraw their subjection to the see of Rome, and withhold their usual payments.”*

The envoys chosen by Anselm, were Baldwin his favourite monk, and Alexander. Henry sent three, two of whom had private reasons for wishing

* Henry’s England, vol. v., p. 294.

to go to Rome. The letter sent by these envoys was characteristic of the family of William the Conqueror—frank, bold, fearless, hearty, and generous. It congratulated Paschal upon his elevation to the papal chair; trusted that the amity so long maintained by the popes of Rome with the kings of England might continue; and as an earnest of the desire, was accompanied with the contribution called Peter's Pence. It promised that all the honours and obedience due by the custom of William to the pontiff should be still paid, but no more; the condition, it maintained, of all obedience must be the rights of the kings of England. He would protect those rights and privileges; and should he so far forget his duty as to neglect them, his barons and the people of England would undertake the privileges which their fathers had secured. It concluded with an affectionate trust, that nothing should ever be done to compel him to withhold his obedience to the holy see.

The result of this mission was very similar to the proceedings of the legate who brought the pallium to Anselm in the reign of Rufus, and the conduct of the popes Urban and Paschal was much the same. What passed at Rome could not be known except by the envoys, and their accounts differed very widely. Baldwin and Alexander brought to Anselm the letters from the pope, and messages cheerfully appreciative of his conduct, and confirmatory of his authority. The letter rejoices that neither the violence of tyrants, nor the favour of the wealthy,

has been able to detach him from his faith and duty to the church. It gives him the liberty to act as sole legate for the pope to do what he pleases. He is informed that only recently at a synod held in the consistory of the Lateran, the former decrees had been renewed against the lay-investiture, denounced as the corrupt source of simony, and of secular patronage.

On the other hand the legates of Henry returned to him, bringing both messages and letters. A council was called in London, 1102. The alternative of the king was, "Comply with the traditional usages of the kingdom, or quit it." Anselm appealed to the letters of the pope; the king would neither listen to those the primate had received, nor permit his own to be read; nor would he be bound to act according to these letters.

The king appears to have left the council, and Anselm read his letters to those about him; and it was then that the three bishops who had been legates for Henry declared that the letters did not agree with what the pope had himself told them. They affirmed that the pope had promised, in consideration of the general obedience of Henry and his management of the churches, to repeal during his life the canons against lay-investiture, and not to excommunicate those who received the cross and ring from his hands. The monks stated the opposite. It was purely a question of fact,—a violent personal debate arose out of it, one of course maintaining the words of monks fortified by letters was of more

value than that of bishops without letters.* The bishops replying that the pope had not treated them in private and public alike; so on went the controversy, *ad nauseam*.

It is to be hoped that both parties, the controversy being over, came to the conclusion that they had been fooled by the pope. Anselm seems to have had some misgiving that day. He wrote a letter to the pope invoking all the charity of their religion. He fears neither exile, poverty, tortures, nor death; he feels prepared for all, for everything, for the sake of the authority and liberty of his mother, the church of Christ. All he asks is, to know what is the sovereign will. Either let him know that England is excepted from the excommunication of councils, or that everything has to be maintained at any expense, or let him know the exceptions, if there be any, to the general law. This letter he despatched to Rome.

No evidence can be more conclusive than the following, that Anselm was carrying on a war of principle. He determined not to fight the battle over particular cases, or specific instances. He was himself doubtless fatigued and worn with these repeated controversies; and he therefore proposed to Henry that the two bishoprics which were then vacant should be filled by his investiture, and that he would exclude no one from his communion until definite instructions should arrive

* Some one suggested letters were but sheepskin! "Well," replied the monks, "were not the holy gospels written on parchment!"

from Rome. He, however, would not consecrate such as had so acquired their dignity. The bishoprics of Hereford and Salisbury were then filled up. The latter was filled by Roger, his chancellor; a man who, before the accession of Henry, had been a sort of chaplain to himself and followers, and steward of his household. He had formerly been a clerk in a church near Caen; Henry, while in the service of his brother William, passing that way, entered, and ordered mass to be read. The unusual expedition of the priest recommended him to the notice of the prince and his noble followers, who thought "no man so fit for chaplain to men of their profession." He was afterwards known as Roger the Great; conducted the affairs of state when Henry was away; laid out his wealth in buildings, and rebuilt the church at Salisbury. In the reign of Stephen, he had become so powerful that he excited the suspicion of the king—was degraded and openly insulted in the council, his castles taken from him, his treasures pillaged; and he shortly afterwards died, unpitied, "so much envy and hatred had his excessive power drawn on him."*

At Michaelmas, 1102, says the Saxon Chronicle, "the king was at Westminster, with all the head men of this land, both clergy and laity; and archbishop Anselm held a synod, at which many decrees were made touching the Christian religion. Since the days of Lanfranc no such assembly had been known in England,—a synod called for the express

* Malmsbury, 509.

purpose of reforming the manners and purifying the practices of clergy and laity. Several examples were made of abbots convicted of simony. Six at least were deposed for this crime, and three for other reasons. One of the six was Aldewin of Ramsay; one of the three was Richard, promoted two years before to Ely, and who, although educated at Bec, and allied to the royal family, was spared neither by the indulgence of Anselm, nor by the favour of the king.*

The ancient canons against marriage and concubinage were renewed at this synod, and a more strict arrangement was now made by a retrospective law, that commanded those who had wives to put them away. Sons of priests were not allowed to inherit their fathers' churches, abbots not to be absentees either by night or day from their monasteries, marriage prohibited to them within the seventh degree; the worship of fountains forbidden, that those who had long hair should submit to lose it, and that the traffic in slaves should be discontinued. "Anselm put forth in plain language what had been decreed in the general council at Rome, concerning the investiture of churches; namely, that no prelate of a church, bishop, abbot, or clerk should receive investiture of any ecclesiastical dignity from the hand of a layman."†

Difficulties arose again and again; Anselm had promised to consecrate only one bishop out of those who had received investiture from the king, William

* Remusat and Roger de Wendover.

† Wendover.

Gifford, because he had been elected to Winchester against his own desire, and had retired to Rouen rather than exercise his functions. The king refused to permit this exception, and imperiously demanded the consecration of the three bishops of Salisbury, Winchester, and Hereford. The last of the three lay dangerously ill, and sent to Anselm begging him to consecrate him previous to his death. We smile at the superstition of the poor bishop. Malmsbury the chronicler tells us that the holy archbishop laughed at the astonishing folly of the proposal. The half-made bishop died, and the queen's chancellor was elected in his stead. Henry finding Anselm would not consecrate the three, ordered the archbishop of York to do so. He proposed to do so,—a day was arranged,—St. Paul's was prepared at London. Anselm went to Mortlake to await the result. To the king's mortification, Reinelm of Hereford returned his crosier and ring, thinking that so indirect a blessing might prove a curse; Girard, nevertheless, was determined to persevere, and the bishops urged him to do so. Again the king was disappointed; at the very moment of the solemnity William Gifford refused either to make the usual confession, or to bow his head to the archbishop of York. The assembly broke up, and the king banished William.

The struggle was now fairly begun. In the spring the king had business on the coast, and returning from Dover, he called upon the primate at Canterbury. Anselm had just received the answer

of the pope to his letters for instruction. The seal was not broken, and he proposed to abide by the contents of the epistle. "I will tolerate no longer these delays," said the king; "I will finish this question. What have I to do with the pope and his letter? All the prerogatives of my predecessors belong to me; he who would despoil me of them is my enemy, and shall feel the weight of my anger." "I am determined to die rather than violate the canons of the church," was the reply. The king, surrounded by his nobles, all anxious to end this dispute, proposed that Anselm should himself go to Rome to request the pope to grant the king the use of the prerogatives his predecessors had enjoyed. At the request of Anselm this was delayed for discussion at the Easter festivities and councils. On the 29th of March the council was held. He promised to go to Rome, although he was sixty-nine years of age, and on condition that he should not be expected to ask anything contrary to his views of the general church welfare and his own honour. It was replied to him that the king would send an envoy who would state his case, and all that Anselm would have to do would be to speak to the truth of the envoy's statement. He left England on the 27th of April, 1103; not till he arrived at Bec did he open the pope's letters. He then read:—

"PASCHAL TO ANSELM. We have received those most gratifying letters of your affection, written with the pen of charity. In these we recognise the fervency of your devotion, and, considering the

strength of your faith, and the earnestness of your pious care, we rejoice, because by the grace of God neither promises elevate nor threats depress you. We lament, however, that after having kindly received our brother bishops, the ambassadors of the king of England, they should, on their return home, report what we never uttered or even thought of. For we have heard that they said, if the king conducted himself well in other respects, we should neither prohibit the investiture of the churches, nor anathematize them when conferred; but that we were unwilling thus to write, lest from this precedent other princes should exclaim. Wherefore we call Jesus, who trieth the hearts and reins, as witness to our soul, if ever such a horrid crime even entered our imagination, since we assumed the care of this holy see. . . . If therefore a lay hand present the staff, the sign of the shepherd's office, or the ring, the emblem of faith, what have the bishops to do in the church? Moreover, those bishops who have changed the truth into a lie, that truth, which is God, being the criterion, we separate from the favour of St. Peter and our society, until they have made satisfaction to the church of Rome. Such therefore as have received the investiture or consecration during the truce we regard as aliens to our communion and to the church."

Pentecost was spent at Chartres in the company of Henry's sister Adela, who had married Stephen of Blois, and Ives the bishop. Both showed him much kindness, and prevented his going forward, as

the heat was at the time very great, especially in Italy. The bishop held more moderate opinions than Anselm on these points, and strove to reduce his zeal to his own temperature. Anselm stayed in Normandy till August, and then set forth for Rome. He kept up a constant correspondence with his friends in England, especially the bishop of Rochester, who managed his affairs. He received a letter from the king, which, couched in affectionate terms, begged him to delay his journey. He feared that diplomacy rather than kindness had dictated it; he pushed on, and upon arriving at Rome he found he had been preceded some days by William de Warlewast, the unscrupulous agent of William Rufus, who had rifled his luggage at Dover in the year 1097, and who was made bishop of Exeter in 1107.

Anselm was received with great honour, lodged in the Lateran, and allowed three days for repose. A council was then held for the settlement of the question. William de Warlewast pleaded warmly the cause of his master; he had probably gained many friends during his stay in Rome, and as Roger of Wendover says, "the holy see is never wanting to any one, if anything of a white or red* colour pass between the parties."

William de Warlewast made a long and forcible speech in the consistory called by the pope. He described the position of England, the munificence of its kings to Rome; and insinuated that all this would

* Silver or gold.

be withdrawn if the right of investiture were not granted. Encouraged partly by the voice of one who said that the demand should be granted to so grave a monarch, and by the silence of Anselm, he exclaimed that he knew, whatever might be said on either side of this question, the king his master would rather lose his kingdom than relinquish his right to investiture. Like all passionate speeches, it was an unfortunate one. It aroused the vanity and passion of the pope, who declared in his turn that if Henry would rather lose his kingdom, pope Paschal would as soon lose his head as permit this pretended right to Henry. This concluded the sitting; and the pope sends Warlewast back with this letter:—

“PASCHAL THE BISHOP TO KING HENRY, HEALTH. From your letter lately entrusted to us of your servant, our beloved son, William the clerk, we have been certified both of the safety of your person, and of those prosperous successes which the Divine favour hath granted you in the subjugation of the adversaries of your kingdom. We have heard too that you have had the male issue you so much desired by your noble and religious consort. As we have derived pleasure from this, we think it a good opportunity to impress the commands and will of God more strongly upon you at a time when you perceive yourself indebted to his kindness for such ample favours. We also are desirous of associating our kindness with the benefits of God towards you; but it is distressing that you should seem to require

what we cannot possibly grant. For if we consent, or suffer, that investitures be conferred by your excellence, no doubt it will be to the great detriment both of ourselves and of you. In this matter we wish you to consider what you lose by not performing, or gain by performing. For we, by such a prohibition, obtain no increase of influence, or patronage, over the churches; nor do we endeavour to take away anything from your just power and right; but only that God's anger may be diminished towards you, and thus every prosperity attend you. God, indeed, hath said, 'Those that honour me I will honour; and those that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.' You will then say, 'It is my right.' No truly; it is neither an imperial nor royal, but a divine right; it is his only who has said, 'I am the door:' wherefore I entreat for his sake, whose due it is, that you would restore and concede it to him, to whose love you owe what you possess. But why should we oppose your pleasure, or run counter to your good will, unless we were aware that in consenting to this matter we should oppose the will of God and lose his favour? Why should we deny you anything which might be granted to any man living, when we should receive greater favours in return? Consider, my dearest son, whether it be an honour or a disgrace that Anselm, the wisest and most religious of the Gallican bishops, on this account fears to be familiar with you, or to continue in your kingdom. What will those persons think who have hitherto had such

favourable accounts of you? What will they say when this gets noised abroad? The very people who before your face commend your excess, will, when out of your presence, be the first more loudly to vilify the transaction. Return, then, to your understanding, my dearest son, we entreat you, for the mercy of God and for the love of his only begotten Son; recall your pastor; recall your father; and if, what we do not imagine, he hath in anything conducted himself harshly towards you, and hath opposed the investiture, we will mediate according to your pleasure, as far as God permits; but, nevertheless, remove from your person and your kingdom the infamy of such an expulsion. If you do this, even though you should ask very difficult matters of us; and all, if with God's permission, we can grant, you shall certainly obtain them; and we will be careful to entreat the Lord for you, himself assisting, and will grant indulgence and absolution, as well to your sins as to those of your consort, through the merits of the holy apostles. Moreover, we will, together with you, cherish the son whom you have begotten on your exemplary and noble consort; and who is, as we have heard, named after your excellent father William, with such anxious care, that whosoever shall injure either you or him, shall be regarded as having done injury to the church of Rome. Dated at the Palace of Lateran, the ninth before the Kalends of December." *

Treating Anselm with the greatest kindness,

* William of Malmsbury, p. 448.

Paschal issued a bull (16th November, 1103) confirming all the ancient privileges possessed by his predecessors. Under the plea of a pilgrimage to a certain St. Nicholas of those parts, De Warlewast remained at Rome after the primate, and attempted negotiations with the pope; but his attempts were fruitless. He left Rome, and finding Anselm at Milan, travelled with him to Sevres. He there delivered a message from Henry, that if he would act as former archbishops had done, he might return to England; otherwise not. He owned to Anselm that he had expected the result of his negotiations at Rome would have been different. Anselm wrote to the king a short letter, telling him the message of Warlewast had closed England against him; that he could not be to him what Lanfranc had been to his father, since the holy see had decided the question of homage and investiture. But excepting in this he was at his service, and only awaited his orders to return to England. He learned soon after that the king had seized upon his estates.

Anselm, on his way through Florence, was either entertained by Matilda, the celebrated countess, or at least received from her great marks of esteem. She was the most remarkable woman of her age. Daughter of the duke of Tuscany, she inherited the most beautiful provinces in Italy. At the opening of the quarrel between Hildebrand and Europe, she threw herself into the contest with all the piety and courage she was possessed of. At the head of her troops she defended the approaches to Rome from

the army of the emperor; and when beaten by superior forces, and compelled to leave Rome, besieged the sheltered Gregory in his castle, and soothed the sorrows of his mortified ambition. She has a reputation that the church deservedly honours, and which the breath of scandal has not dimmed.*

Hugh, archbishop of Lyons, returned from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, welcomed Anselm, and kept him with him six months. There he learnt what the king had determined to do. In vain Edgar of Holland had mediated—in vain Matilda, the queen, entreated. Henry would not lower, and Anselm would not accept his terms. Matilda wrote in the most affectionate manner to him, begging him to return. It must have been difficult for the primate to have refused to comply with such a request from such a lady; but Anselm was contending for a principle; he was striving for that uniformity of obedience, that unity of practice, which Rome loved. He felt himself accountable to posterity for the condition in which he handed down the property he had received. An old man, he needed rest; a scholar, he should have been free from anxiety; a bishop, he would fain have been among his flock, “feeding the church of Christ;” penniless, when he should have been wealthy,—he nevertheless voluntarily endured exile and all its concomitant evils, rather than relinquish a struggle which appeared almost hopeless. A pope with a doubtful word—

* See Neander for her vindication from current slanders.

clergy everywhere recommending submission—a king whose virtues and popular bearing were sufficient to excuse his obstinacy in this matter,—all these things were against him. In no instance, in no part of his life, does the rectitude and moral courage of Anselm appear so great as at this time, when, amid the prayers of his people at home, the requests of the queen, the tempting offers of royal friendship, he stood unmoved, standing by the principle he had adopted—viz., uniformity. Added to this was the feeling that most of the good men, men whose opinions he would have been glad to have secured, were against him. He was asked if for a single word of De Warlewast's he would consent to keep away from his people and his flock. The king aided this feeling by pretending a great desire for his return, and by having apparently no means unused for bringing it about; new embassies were planned for Rome—the queen wrote to the pope begging him to order his return; so pathetically she asked it of the pope, that Anselm had more than once to explain and justify his conduct.

It was not alone to the pope that Anselm thought it necessary to justify and explain his conduct,—he also wrote a letter to Ernulf, the prior of the monastery at Canterbury, in which he reminds his friends that if they deplore his absence from England, they must remember it is partly the effect of their friendship. They had evidently wounded him by their suspicions, and by their officious party zeal; he admits that he finds it difficult to explain to his

wise monks his desertion of his flock without apparent reason. He shows them that he cannot, without peril to his soul, after the late apostolic decision, hold communion with those who have violated the canon laws; and he then supposes a case—that of the coronation of the king, which among the first Normans was repeated several times,—then he would have to celebrate mass; around him would be the excommunicated bishops—he could not drive them out, he dare not communicate with them. He could not refuse the accustomed honour to the king—a duty devolving upon him by order of the pope, etc. Suppose the king should order him to leave the court, and confine himself to the duties of his pastorate; not only the king, but the nobility would then complain that he was wanting in his duty as primate, and had tarnished the lustre of the crown. The king would transfer to another church the prerogative of the Romish. When, therefore, he is charged with fleeing on account of a word from the flock for whom it was his duty to shed his blood, he replies that the case is not so slight when it involves so many evils to their church. He fears neither to shed his blood, nor to lose his property; if anything should happen to him, he would suffer it with cheerfulness; but nothing *would* fall upon him,—the church would suffer most in any protracted struggle with a king.

Doubtless he did say in the previous year that he would not leave his charge; but that was more because he would not appear to fly from menace

than because he had any confidence in the use of his presence. Having defended himself from the charge of slandering the king, through his monks Eadmer and Alexander, he replies to their question how they are to conduct themselves in relation to those bishops with whom he has no communion. He gives them most timid and temporizing counsels, such as quite freed them from any opposition, and which reduced the quarrel between the church and state to a hand-to-hand contest between himself and king. But for himself he will become "the man"* of no one, nor will he engage himself to any one by oath of fidelity; and if any one requires from a monk of their church any speech or engagement of fidelity, or any compact contrary to rule, let him reflect and resist according to his power. The question of communion he leaves virtually unsettled. It is less grave to hold communion with those with whom the king holds communion, especially when the interdict has not been addressed to them; still he dare not recommend communion: but they cannot isolate themselves from all the world, and so if he finds them on his return as when he left them, he will have no reproaches for them.

Anselm then leaves the archbishop of Lyons, and travels nearer to England, stays at Rheims, and calls on his way at a priory of the abbey of Cluny to see Adela, the sister of Henry, who was ill.† He had

* Feudal expression.

† Miss Strickland gives a very interesting letter from Maud to Anselm:—"She styles herself to him, Maud, by the grace of God queen of England, the lowliest of the handmaidens of his holiness: 'I greet

been her religious director; he was perhaps anxious to pay court through her. He tells her he is armed with a bull to excommunicate her brother; she, alarmed, begs him to go with her to Chartres, where she hoped to find Henry. Henry and Anselm accordingly met in the castle L'Aigle (July 21st, 1105). They easily came to terms on the question of the sequestered estates which Henry had seized; but Anselm would not promise to hold communion with the excommunicated bishops. Embassies to Rome were again proposed. Anselm promised to remain in Normandy till the return of the embassies. He went to Bec. The king on his return did not hurry to send a minister. It was about Christmas when William Warlewast arrived, and in company with Baldwin started for Rome.

The envoys succeeded beyond their expectations. On the 23rd of March, 1106, they obtained letters

the little piece of parchment sent by you, as I would one from my father himself. I place it in my bosom near my heart; I read over and over again the words flowing from your kindness; my mind ponders them; my heart considers them. Yet, while I prize all you say, I marvel at what your wise excellency says about your nephew.' . . . She foretells that 'the return of the pastor to the flock, of the father to his daughter, would soon take place from the good will which, by carefully examining, I find really to exist in the heart of my lord. In truth, his mind has more friendship towards you than you think. I cultivate it, promoting whatsoever good feeling I can, in order that he may be reconciled to you. Whatsoever he may grant now in regard to your return, will be followed by further concessions when, in the future, you may see occasion to desire them. . . . But if he should still persist in overstepping the bounds of justice, I implore from the plenitude of your charity, as the venom of rancour is not accustomed to be in you, that you turn not from him the benignity of your regard, but piously intercede with God for him, for me, and for the children that spring from us both; likewise for the people of our realm. May your holiness ever fare well.' "

to Anselm and to the king; which ran as follows:—

“PASCHAL TO ANSELM. Since the condescension of Almighty God hath inclined the heart of the king of England to obedience to the papal see, we give thanks to the same God of mercies, in whose hands are situated the hearts of kings. We believe it indeed to have been effected through favour to your charity and the earnestness of your prayers, that in this respect the heavenly mercy hath regarded the people over whom your watchfulness presides. But whereas we so greatly condescend to the king and those who seem culpable, you must know that this has been done from kindness and compassion, that we may lift up those that are down. And you also, reverend and dearest brother in Christ, we release from the prohibition, or, as you conceive, excommunication, which, you understand, was denounced against investitures or homage by our predecessor of holy memory, pope Urban. But do you, by the assistance of God, accept those persons who either receive investitures, or consecrate such as have received them, or do homage on making that satisfaction which we signify to you by our common legates, William and Baldwin, faithful and true men, and absolve them by virtue of our authority. These you will either consecrate yourself, or command to be consecrated by such as you choose; unless perchance you should discover somewhat in them on account of which they ought to be deprived of their sacred honours. And if any hereafter, in

addition to the investitures of the churches, shall have accepted prelacies, even though they have done homage to the king, yet let them not on this account be denied the office of consecration, until by the grace of Almighty God the heart of the king may be softened by the dew of your preaching to omit this. Moreover, against the bishops who have brought, as you know, a false report from us, our heart is more vehemently moved, because they have not only injured us, but have led astray the minds of many simple people, and impelled the king to want of charity for the papal see. Wherefore, by the help of God, we suffer not their crime to pass unpunished ; but since the earnestness of our son the king unceasingly intreats for them, you will not deny even them the participation of your communion. Indeed, you will, according to our promise, absolve from their transgressions and from penance the king and his consort, and those nobles who for this business, together with the king, have by our command been under sentence, whose names you will learn from the information of the aforesaid William. We commit the cause of the bishop of Rouen* to your consideration, and we grant to him whatsoever you may allow.” †

The concessions contained in this letter were very marked. The king had clearly gained his point. The pope seems to feel that Anselm will not

* He had been suspended some years for having married Philip the king to the wife of Count Montfort, he being alive.

† Malmsbury, 451.

agree with him. The messengers found him very ill at Bec, not able to leave for some weeks—Warlewast sent with letters to fetch him. The king arrived at Bec on the day of the Assumption; and Anselm was able to say mass. Henry there promised to take off the tax from the clergy; those who had not paid need not do so; and that whatever had been taken from the archbishop during his absence should be repaid. Having received these guarantees, Anselm landed at Dover at the end of August, 1106.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAST YEARS OF ANSELM.

HENRY was not in England on the return of Anselm; he was at the time prosecuting with vigour his schemes for reducing Normandy to order, either under the rule of his brother or himself. He resembled his father in two important points; he allowed no pillage but his own, or for him; and he permitted no one to oppress the church save himself. He was essentially the friend of order, both in England and Normandy; the clergy, despite his treatment of Anselm, clung to him with grateful tenacity.

During the year 1102, Henry had carried on hostilities of no mean character against that sworn foe to all order and law, Robert de Belèsue; he had besieged his castles of Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury, taken them, and finally banished him, and many more earls like him, from England. Robert and his friends retired to Normandy, where "there was no one of capacity to take the lead against the powerful freebooter." Duke Robert raised a force to oppose him but was defeated. Belèsue destroyed monasteries, pillaged nunneries and private houses,

and imprisoned and tortured his victims. Duke Robert lamented his misfortunes, but submitted; he soon patched up a treaty with his rebellious earl, restoring to him certain estates which had belonged to his family. Among these was the bishopric of Seèz; Serlo the bishop of which, and Ralph the abbot, fled to England, to carry the news of Duke Robert's infidelity to his brother, and to beg assistance against Robert de Belèscue. Bishop Serlo afterwards returned; but abbot Ralph was made bishop of Rochester, and afterwards primate in the room of Anselm.

In 1104, Henry passed over into Normandy, having with him the chief men of his kingdom; he severely blamed his brother for having, by his indolence, abetted thieves and robbers. A treaty was agreed upon, and a promise given for the better government of the kingdom; but they were of no value. Immediately on the return of Henry to England the old practices recommenced, and in April of the next year Henry landed at Barfleur; rested for a short time at the village of Carentan; was met there by Serlo the bishop, whom he had reinstated and protected; from him he learned that the state of affairs in Normandy was quite as bad as the exiles had reported to him; the freebooting Belèscue and his companions had ravaged the country all around; had robbed and murdered the defenceless wealthy, set fire to the houses of the poor; that year he had burnt the church of Tournai and forty-five persons in it, the inhabitants had many of them

fled into France for protection, their property they had stowed away in the churches. Henry entered the church of Carentan, and "seated himself, with some of his nobles, among the peasants' panniers at the lower end of the church." The furniture, the agricultural implements, the packages of the villagers, were piled about him. The bishop used the occasion for addressing Henry, calling upon him to be the "Phinehas and Mattathias" of Normandy, and for denouncing Duke Robert in no measured terms. Henry promised; his nobles promised also to give order to the distracted country.

The struggle in which Henry was thus engaged lasted till Michaelmas of the next year (1106); but he was not the whole time in Normandy. He was compelled to return to England after having taken and burnt Bayeux, with its cathedral, whither the people had fled for safety, and after having driven his brother from Caen; owing partly to his want of supplies, and partly to the retirement of Count Elias at the request of the Normans. In the interval both parties strengthened themselves; Henry for a final encounter with Robert, having evidently determined to obtain a permanent possession of Normandy as well as England. Robert suspected as much, and while his friends were arranging their defence on the continent, he came to the English court to obtain terms from Henry. The king would yield nothing that he had gained. Robert returned; and Henry followed him in the month of July.

Henry led his army to the attack of a castle

belonging to William, Earl Moreton or Montaigne, the son of Odo, who had caused so many troubles in the two previous reigns. In the clumsy fashion of the times, he built a fort opposite to the castle, and placed in it a troop of horse and foot to cut off the sallies of the garrison. Earl William commenced a vigorous defence; he filled his castles with men and provisions, cut down all the corn in the neighbourhood, and in time besieged the king's fort. Henry urged on the siege; William obtained fresh supplies. He called on Duke Robert and his friends to attack the English troops on the rear. Duke Robert assembled his army, and ordered his brother to raise the siege of a castle situated on his territory. This was just what Henry most desired; anxious to bring on an engagement with his brother, he yet feared to commence hostilities, which he did all he could to provoke. Burning with ambition to obtain possession of Normandy, he yet wished it to appear that he seized it in the cause of order, not as a mere soldier. The answer which he returned Robert, as reported by Ordericus Vitalis, expresses that feeling—that he burns with zeal for God and the country. The battle of Finchebray was the result of the different messages which passed between the brothers. Robert drew his troops together, troops which had many of them fought with him upon the plains of Syria, led by the sagacious Earl of Moreton, the brave but wicked Belèsue, and the faithful but unfortunate Edgar Atheling. Henry was followed by the flower of English and Norman knighthood;

everything was on his side, the clergy in his favour, the hatred of the English in his camp, the horror of the inhabitants. The battle was fought on the anniversary of that of Hastings. Just forty years before, William, the father of these two men, had gained the greatest victory of his age, and subjected the boldest and most enterprising of people to his rule; and now here were gathered on this field the Breton who had fled from the tyranny of the invading Saxon five hundred years before, the Saxon who had succumbed under the martial skill of the Norman forty years before, arrayed under the leadership of a Norman, to fight with Normans.

Henry conquered. In vain Duke Robert fought on foot surrounded by his "followers trained in the Jerusalem wars;" in vain William of Moreton urged his men forward after he had created some confusion. Henry triumphed, the *Bretons'* knights bore down on the flank of the duke's army and routed it. The English chronicler (William of Malmsbury), writing in the English monastery, thinks it was "doubtless by the wise dispensation of God that Normandy should be subjected to England on the same day that the Norman power had formerly arrived to subjugate that kingdom." From this time Robert, the eldest son of William the great duke, drops out of history. He was taken prisoner, carried to England, and confined by his brother in Cardiff Castle. There he lived eight and twenty years, expiating by a life of intolerable solitude the many crimes of which he had been guilty.

Henry announced his victory to Anselm in a letter which gave him an opportunity of displaying the character he had assumed of a patron of law and the church, and of informing his reconciled primate of the course he meant to pursue; he trusted that henceforth the church would remain free, unshaken by the storms of war.

Anselm was now an old man, feeble and inconstant in health; he was evidently drawing to the close of his public life. He had returned to England after his second forced absence, and the unanimity which prevailed, the influence he had obtained, the temper of the king, were favourable to those social and ecclesiastical changes which he was desirous of effecting. Henry had returned to England, and had held his court as usual at Easter, but did not then enter upon any ecclesiastical matters. He spoke to his nobles of England and Normandy, who attended, we are told, "with fear and trembling," with the tone of a conqueror, not apologetically as the youngest son, but as one who had subdued both his fatherland and family. During March he had held a council at Lisieux for the arrangement of his new provinces, and had then restored to his ancient foe Ralph Flambard his former bishopric of Durham, in consideration of the assistance rendered by the wily bishop after the victory of Finchebray. At Pentecost he held his court at Westminster, and early in the month of August he opened the "Council of London," from which for three days Anselm was absent, owing to his health. The most important

transaction at this council was the compromise agreed upon respecting the vexed question of investitures; "the king ordained that from that time no bishop or abbot should receive investiture by the staff and ring through the hands of the king or of any other lay person: whilst on the other hand the archbishop conceded that no one elected to a dignity should be refused consecration by reason of the homage which he should make to the king."

Anselm in his letter to the pope, and Eadmer in his History, claim the honour of a victory over the king in this decree; but really they cannot be said to have gained much. The language which the pope used at the council of Bari was very unlike the tone of compromise, and the determination with which Anselm himself had always spoken would hardly have led us to expect this termination. "So lame and impotent a conclusion" might surely have been arrived at sooner. It should be especially remembered by those writers who maintain the victory of Anselm, that his decree left the church fast bound in the thralldom of the feudal system, a thralldom entirely unknown in England until the victory of Henry's father: the mere ecclesiastical rite of investiture might be safely left in the hands of the clergy, if the feudal homage were still due to the king. The result is estimated by Dr. Lingard thus:—"If Henry surrendered an unnecessary ceremony, he still retained the substance. The right which he assumed of nominating bishops and abbots was left unimpaired; and, though he pro-

mised not to appropriate to himself the revenues of the vacant benefices, he never hesitated to violate his engagement."

Immediate advantage was taken of this decision to consecrate several bishops and abbots. On the 11th of the same month in which the council was held, Anselm, assisted by his suffragans, consecrated five or six bishops; among them was Ralph the Flambard, the former enemy of himself and his church. Nobody remembered so many candidates for consecration. "Since the days of Pleigmund, in the reign of Edward the elder,"* none such had taken place.

Another council was held in London in 1108. It is remarkable only for the canons which were passed to regulate the domestic life of the clergy. Six years before, Anselm had been chiefly instrumental in the making of laws, forbidding the ordination of the sons of priests; but they were found too strict, and were never carried out. Nature triumphed over ecclesiastical law, and even the pope was obliged to restrain the zeal of the primate, and to repeal a regulation, the enforcement of which, he said, would be very inconvenient in England, where the best part of the clergy were the sons of priests. During the exile of Anselm such a law would probably have been permitted to lie unnoticed, as few of the higher clergy had felt the same conscientious objection to a practice which the vows they had made did not permit to them. We may

* Johnson's Ecc. Canons.

admire the spirit in which Anselm carried on this struggle against natural affection, but we cannot certainly approve of its purpose; far better would it have been that all the clergy in England should have been married, than that a large portion of them should have been living in open opposition to the laws of their order, and that of not a few of the higher clergy could it be said that they were as licentious as the nobles. Ten canons were passed at this council in reference to this matter; every possible case was foreseen that could by any means arise in which an offending priest had attempted to evade the law; from archdeacons to canons, all are to put away their wives; those who do so are not to say mass until they have passed a quarantine of penance and absolution; those who refuse, to be deposed and excommunicated; women and goods to be delivered up to the bishop of the diocese. A provision is also made for the protection of offenders from future temptation. All women are to be removed from the dwellings of such priests; and the possibility of offence limited by the enforced presence of witnesses when there is a necessity for communication.

Anselm's life closed in controversy; the question of rivalry between the two sees of York and Canterbury, which it had cost Lanfranc so much to settle with his contemporary Thomas, was again asked of Anselm. Girard, the successor to Thomas, died suddenly, and in the summer of 1108 Henry chose his chaplain, Thomas, nephew of the former prelate

of that name, and son of the bishop of Worcester, to succeed to the see of York. Thomas was not consecrated. Urged it seems by the clergy of his diocese, and seeing that Anselm was growing old, he determined to postpone the ceremony; so that Anselm being too feeble, or having died, he might be able to avoid the usual submission, and thus establish a precedent. Anselm was too wise to allow this to pass; he wrote to the pope and to Thomas, warning the latter that his see should not be vacant more than three months, and fixing a day on which the delay must terminate. That if he did not then comply with the rite, he should use his own authority and take possession of the see. Thomas still delayed submission, alleging as a reason the absence of the king in Normandy. Anselm would wait no longer, but wrote a letter to Thomas demanding submission, or threatening excommunication. He wrote also to the bishop excommunicating any who should dare to consecrate him without the acknowledgment of the superiority of Canterbury. This was his last act; he shortly afterwards died, when the Romish legate arrived bringing a letter from the pope requiring submission, and the pallium. Thomas still struggled against it. Ralph of Durham, ever believing in the power of money, advised him to bribe the king; but his advice was worthless; the king heard the letter of the departed primate read, and though vexed that such a one had been written without his sanction, he nevertheless gave judgment in its favour. Both the father and brother of Thomas urged this

decision, with which Thomas complied, inserting in the record of the fact, the note that it was done by order of the king. The protest became as valuable to the succeeding archbishops of York as the precedent of non-submission would have been; and in spite of the triumphant expression of Eadmer that Anselm, though absent from this world, gained the cause of the church, Canterbury had renewed a struggle which never brought any special honour to it, and which cost her the life of one of her greatest prelates. In this struggle died Becket sixty years after.

During the absence of Henry in Normandy, Anselm acted for him in the same capacity as Lanfranc for his father. He undertook the management of the most urgent matters in the kingdom, and acted as a sort of regent. Day by day, however, he grew weaker; little by little he found his strength failing, and his capacity for enjoyment and labour diminished. With the most affectionate attention he was watched by his friends. The queen wrote him a letter on his austere habits. For months he was unable to ride on horseback; then walking was abandoned, and finally he was unable to attend even the services of the church. Amid all his weakness, however, he found sufficient strength to put the last touches to his treatise on "Free Will and Predestination." He complained of no pain; he experienced only a great weakness; if he could eat he hoped he should yet recover. Towards the evening of the third day in Holy Week, the bishop of Rochester begged him to give his blessing to his friends, his monks, and the

royal family. He was unable to speak, but raised his right hand and made the sign of the cross. It was his last act. At matins one of the brothers brought him the gospel, and read the passage for the day. In it occurs the words, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." There the reader stopped; those present saw that Anselm would that hour realize the promise made to the first fathers of his church. He died then, on the 21st of April, 1109. They buried him near to his friend and master, to the south of the altar. His contemporaries have left a dreary record of his miracles, and of the marvels that occurred in connexion with him; they are not sufficiently ingenious to deserve transcription, and the only value we can attach to them is, that they show us how very far before his time this great man was. He was undoubtedly the greatest and best man of his age; the world generally gives to Lanfranc the highest seat as a politician; and some have placed the piety of Anselm in the second place. The contrast is hardly a fair one; it is one in which both men lose. Lanfranc was a man whose courage and decision seemed more real than Anselm's, because accompanied with a greater force of expression; unconsciously, probably those who were opposed to him felt that they had to overcome decision not merely based on principle, but fortified by personal feeling; that his determination would

be hardly less strong if there were no question of principle involved. With Anselm it was not a personal matter at all; it would have been, we believe, an impossibility to have engaged that man in a dispute about a single acre of ground which belonged solely to himself; rather than arouse or feel animosity and wrath, he would have sacrificed his right of possession. Even in the statement of his determination, his sensitive mind shrunk from a violent expression, and so quietly did he utter his decision that men of warm and pious tempers could not believe it real till it had been supported by time. A man can be a politician of any fortune, who considers facts in relation to the principles which underlie them; the successful politician is a man skilful in arrangements, rapid in resources, brilliant in execution, capable of seeing all present conditions, but careless of future contingencies; one whose moral nature submits without question to the necessity of an hour. Such a man was not Anselm; Lanfranc would never have gone into exile, nor would he have had any necessity for the admonitory letters of pope Paschal to restrain his zeal in the matter of clerical marriages and offspring.

In regard to the religious character of the two men, we have no hesitation in placing Anselm above his predecessor. Lanfranc's mind was of that logical, critical order, that he could rest nowhere between atheism and superstition. That solemn authority which the church possessed gave him at once the quiet certainty for which he longed; without it he

would have hurried distractedly from object to object, striving to beat out from nature a something to believe; but when the church supplied him with *the something*, he was satisfied; and then the power of the man came out, strengthened by the reverent authority of the universal church, trusting to the voice that seemed to him from God, which told him his doctrine was truth; he laboured with an untiring industry, and unquestioning faith, to prove the church had not erred. Philosophy and common sense condemns his method, but the heart of all reflective men sympathize with the worker. With Anselm, the whole thing was different; doubt was an abnormal state with him, faith his natural condition; the truths he held were such as the affection of men have ever clustered around. Had no church pronounced them true, his mind would have gone directly towards them, would have embraced them, and he would have proved them for others. He employed his logic not for the satisfaction of his own mind, but for the conquests of his creed. He taught that to the knowledge of God man might be directed only by the light of reason; but it is impossible not to see that the argument of the metaphysician is denied by the experience of the saint. To see the position he must have occupied had his intellect been ungoverned by those holy affections of his soul, we have only to look at the extravagance of the following century. By those who lived around him, however, Anselm was less understood than he is by the present day. It was reserved for a philosopher

of a later age to appreciate and employ his methods, and for the church in the fifteenth century to recognise his sanctity by canonization. In 1494, Archbishop Moreton procured a bull from Alexander Borgia, the then pope, permitting him to procure the evidences necessary to the acknowledgment of sanctity.

A Moreton and a Borgia!—engaged in canonizing Anselm, the friend of Hildebrand and Matilda!

LIFE OF THOMAS A'BECKET.

THOMAS A'BECKET.

CHAPTER I.

DISPUTED PEDIGREE AND ROMANTIC PARENTAGE.

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHERS confess, in an epigrammatic sentence, envious admiration of the poet's political influence. Not thus expressed, but not unacknowledged, are the historian's obligations to the bard. No one, in these days, undertaking to write the history of a people or a period, ventures to omit a reference to its songs and ballads. He would seek in those humble chronicles incidents to embellish his narrative, and some clue to guide his researches.

There exist, as we shall presently see, large, if not satisfactory, materials for a Life of Thomas a'Becket. But first in interest,—because showing the primary relation of the man to the common people of his age,—we rank the two metrical compositions*

* Jamieson's Popular Songs and Ballads, vol. ii., p. 117.

that relate the story of his parentage. That story is as follows:—

Becket's father—in London born—longed, when a young man, “strange countries for to see.” In the gratification of his curiosity, he was “ta'en by a savage Moor,” who “handled him right cruellie,” making him labour under the burden of timber, skins of wine, and bales of spices; and because, faithful to his Christian creed, “to Mahomed or to Tennegant” he would “never bend a knee,” he was cast “into a dungeon deep, where he could neither hear nor see,” and where, through the course of seven years, he was “for hunger like to die.” The cruel Moor had an only daughter—“her name was called Susie Pye;” who, daily passing near “young Beichen's prison,” often sighed, “she knew not why,” for him that in the dungeon lay. Happening one day to hear him “sadly sing”—

“My hounds, they all go masterless;
My hawks, they flee from tree to tree;
‘My younger brother will heir my land—
Fair England again I'll never see’”—

the doleful sound so sank into her heart, that she could not sleep at night; but stole the keys from her father's head, and went down to the prison. The prisoner mistook her for a fellow-captive; but in answer to his astonished inquiries—

“O, have ye any lands,” she said,
“Or castles, in your own countrie,
That ye could give to a lady fair,
From prison strong to set you free?”

To which he replied—

“Near London town I have a hall,
With other castles two or three;
I'll give them all to a lady fair
That out of prison will set me free.”

The dialogue proceeded:—

“Give me the truth of your right hand,
The truth of it give unto me,
That for seven years ye'll no lady wed,
Unless it be along with me.”

“I'll give thee the truth of my right hand,
The truth of it I'll freely gie,
That for seven years I'll stay unwed,
For the kindness thou dost show to me.”

Thus betrothed, the maiden bribed the warder to set her lover free—gave him “to eat the good spice cake,” and “to drink the blood-red wine,”—broke with him a ring, and bade him

“—before that seven years have an end,
Come back again, love, and marry me.”

But “long ere the seven years had an end,” she pined for and mistrusted her lover. So she “set her foot on good ship bound,” and, after “sailing east and sailing west,” came at last to fair England's shore. “A bonny shepherd,” “feeding his sheep upon the plain,” told her, as a piece of current news, that in yonder hall a wedding had been protracted thirty and three days; the bridegroom, “young Beichen,” refusing to “bed with his bride, for love

of one that's beyond the sea." She found ready attention at the gate of the hall—

"She toil'd softly at the pin"—

the "proud porter" being greatly moved by her beauty and brave attire. She sent in by him her half of the broken ring. It was presented kneeling to the lord—an unusual stretch of homage, it appears; for the lord asks—

"What aileth thee, my proud porter?
Thou art so full of courtesie."

To which the serving-man replied—

"I've been porter at your gates,
It's thirty long years now and three;
But there stands a lady at them now,
The like o' her did I never see;

"For on every finger she has a ring,
And on her mid finger she has three;
And as mickle gold aboon her brow
As would buy an earldom unto me."

The bride's mother was furious at the arrival and the panegyric,—

"Ye might have excepted our bonny bride,
And twa or three of our companie."

But the honest churl answers tartly:—

"O hold your tongue, thou bride's mother,
Of all your folly let me be;
She's ten times fairer nor the bride,
And all that's in your companie."

“She begs one sheave of your white bread,
But and a cup of your red wine;
And to remember the lady's love,
That last relieved you out of pine.”

At this “young Beichen” went down stairs five steps at a time—

Of fifteen steps he made but three—

took in his arms his “bonny love,” and “kist, and kist her tenderlie.” With a gentle reproach that he should have quite forgotten her who gave him “life and libertie,” and looking away to hide her tears,

“Now fare thee well, young Beichen,” she says,
“I'll try to think no more on thee.”

But her lover would not hear of it. The “forenoon bride” was sent back to “her own countrie” with a double dower—and,

He's taen Susie Pye by the white hand,
And gently led her up and down;
And only as he kist her red rosy lips,
“Give welcome, jewel, to your own.”

He's taen her by the milk-white hand,
And led her to yon fountain stone;
He's changed her name from Susie Pye,
And he's called her his bonny love, Lady Jane.

There has been recovered, by the industrious collector of these precious ephemera—recovered from the lips of an old lady who had received them from serving-maids and nurses, from the basket of the pedler, or from the walls to which street literature

is commonly affixed—another ballad* on the same subject. In this the hero's name is written "Bekie"—a nearer approach to the received form of the name of the future chancellor, archbishop, and martyr. He is described here, however, as "a knight"—as going "to the court o' *France*, to serve for meat and fee"—as then falling in love with the king's daughter Isabel, and being consequently thrown into prison. The rest of the story closely resembles that of the first ballad—the lady liberating her lover by night, and adding to liberty the gift of money, horse, and hounds—following him, in less than a twelvemonth, from an impulse of mistrust, taking the form of a spectral visitant and guide—finding him on the point of compulsory marriage with a duke's daughter, and superseding on the instant the unloved bride. Both these ballads have been corrupted by their passage into Scottish popularity—and both may differ much from their common English original. But it will be seen that their widest deviation from the following beautiful legend, told by the oldest biographers of Becket, is not so great as to discredit their claim to be considered a vulgar metrical version of the same.

When Gilbert was a young man, he took up the cross, and went, as a penance, to the Holy Land, attended by only a single serving-man, "whose name was Richard." The company in which they travelled was surprised, taken prisoners, and "given in chains

* Jamieson's Popular Ballads and Songs, vol. ii., p. 127.

to be the slaves of a certain Amenath, chief of the Pagans.”* For a year and a half Gilbert wrought, with the rest, in what would be called in the language of modern slave states a field gang; but at the end of that time was promoted to the lighter labour of the house. Waiting at the prince’s table, “though still in chains,” the lord and his guests would converse with him; asking him of the Christian faith and of the manners of England. His replies excited a special interest in the breast of Amenath’s only daughter, “a beautiful and courtly damsel.” Finding an opportunity of freely conversing with him, she asked, “And would you dare to die for your God, and for that faith of Christ which you profess?” “Most willingly,” replied he, “would I die in the cause of my God.” Penetrated with admiration of such courage and faithfulness, she declared that for his sake she would become a Christian, if he would promise, by the cross for which he professed his readiness to die, to make her his wife. But Gilbert, distrusting such romantic devotion, or unwilling to profit by it, “put her off from day to day;” and one night escaped, with his fellow-prisoners, from her father’s domain. After many days and nights of anxiety and deliberation, the lovelorn damsel resolved to follow the escaped prisoners. Taking only “a small quantity of provisions with her,” she set out by night, reached a port, and “embarked in safety on board a vessel with some foreigners and merchants who understood

* The First Quadrilogus, Paris, 1495. Life and Letters, vol. i., pp.14—22.

her language, and were returning to their native country." But when the vessel reached the English shore, and the damsel had to take leave of her companions, she had "no other means of making known her wishes than by exclaiming—London! London!" At London, however, she arrived; "and," continues the narrator, with the charming minuteness and naturalness of a writer now at home, "wandering through the streets, looked wildly into the faces of the passers-by, to all of whom she afforded subject of derision, particularly the children, who followed her, laughing and marvelling at her foreign dress and uncouth accents. In this guise she passed in front of the house where Gilbert was living, in one of the more open and better frequented quarters of the city, where now stands the hospital erected in honour of St. Thomas. It was soon told in the house that a young crazy girl was going by, followed by boys and others, who were laughing and mocking her. Gilbert's man Richard, who has been mentioned above, ran out with others to see the sight. On approaching nearer, he recognised the damsel, and returned with all speed to tell his master that it was Amenath's daughter who had attracted so great a concourse of people. At these words Gilbert was struck with amazement, and could not believe a thing which he considered absolutely impossible. But as Richard persisted in what he said, his master's incredulity somewhat abated. In doubt what could be the cause of her coming, he nevertheless judged it wiser not to admit her into his own

house ; wherefore, he sent Richard to conduct her to the house of a widow lady who lived near him, who would treat her as if she were her own daughter. The damsel no sooner saw and recognised the man, than she fell down in a swoon, as if dead outright. When she had recovered her senses and risen from the ground, Richard conducted her, as he had been directed, to the widow lady's house. Meanwhile, Gilbert's mind was distracted with the event which had just happened ; and in his doubt what course to take, he determined to go to St. Paul's, and consult the bishop of London. Thither he accordingly went on a certain time, when six of the bishops had met there to deliberate on some important business, either of Church or State. In their presence he related the whole affair, as it has been here described ; when the bishop of Chichester, anticipating the others, exclaimed with a prophetic voice that it was the hand of God, and not of man, which had conducted that woman from so far a land ; and that she would be the mother of a son whose sanctity and sufferings should elevate the whole Church, to the glory of Christ the Lord. The other bishops agreed with the bishop of Chichester in this opinion, and advised that Gilbert should marry the young woman, provided she would consent to be baptized. A day was then fixed—namely, the morrow—on which she was conducted into the presence of the aforesaid bishops, in the Church of St. Paul, where was a baptistery prepared in which she should be baptized. Upon her being asked before the whole congrega-

tion, according to the custom of the Church, by means of the above-named Richard, who acted as interpreter between them, if she were willing to be baptized, she replied, It was for this purpose that I came here from so distant a land, only if Gilbert will take me for his wife. She was, therefore, at once baptized with much solemnity by the six bishops above named, for she was a woman of a noble family, and was more ennobled still by the call which she had received; yea, the call of God himself. The bishops afterwards bestowed her upon Gilbert as his wife, with all the forms of the marriage ceremony, when she had previously been instructed in the nature of the Christian faith. The very next day, we are further told, "Gilbert was again smitten with a strong desire of visiting the Holy Land;" from which we may suppose that having failed, though by no fault of his own, to fulfil his vow by praying at the sepulchre, he was piously disquieted in his conscience. For many days he concealed the cause of his dejection from the wife he feared to leave alone in her adopted country; but she won from him his secret, and "being a woman of high hopes, and already firm in the faith of Christ," strongly urged him to go; only leaving with her Richard, as a guardian, interpreter, and servant. He therefore went,—was absent three years and a half, reaching Jerusalem in safety,—and on his return, A. D. 1118, "found a son named Thomas, a beautiful boy, and high in favour with all his friends and neighbours."

It may have been observed, that in this otherwise circumstantial narrative the lady's name is not once mentioned—neither her native nor her baptismal name. We are informed by several other writers that it was Matilda,—and by one* that it was Rose. This last writer, moreover, differs from the rest in giving Becket an immediate Norman ancestry. Among the Norman traders who, soon after the conquest, emigrated from Rouen or Caen to London, says this writer, “was one Gilbert, surnamed Becket, born at Rouen, and distinguished among his citizens for the respectability of his birth, the energy of his character, and the easy independence of his fortune.† . . . His wife was Rose, a lady of Caen, also of a respectable civic family, fair in person, and fairer still in conduct, an able mistress over her household, and, saving her duty to God, an obedient and loving wife.” Another biographer‡—and he in the closest relation with Becket—alludes to Becket's Norman lineage as a fact notorious to his contemporaries, and influential on his advancement. In the absence of any positive statement to the contrary—looking at the undoubtedly Norman structure of Becket's name, and preferring literal truth to the most inviting speculation, we must decline, with the erudite and painstaking Germans who have investigated this

* The anonymous author of a MS. in the library at Lambeth Palace.

† Thus Dr. Gill translates—“*Genere, strenuitate, fecultatumque possibilitate;*” and it is not easy to find another rendering at once so like in sound, and likely to be accurate in sense.

‡ Fitzstephen.

period,* to follow the brilliant historian of the Conquest,† in arguing Becket's Saxon origin from his popularity with the Saxon people, and in accounting for his popularity with the Saxon people on the assumption of his Saxon sympathies. But neither do we feel compelled to admit, on the authority of an anonymous French writer, and against that of the English chroniclers, that Gilbert a'Becket was himself a Norman. We should rather conclude that he was the son of an earlier emigrant, and had grown up a citizen of London—in the titles of whose chief magistrates, mayor, and aldermen, we find, as Thierry observes,‡ “a singular association of the two languages spoken in England;” indicative of a more rapid amalgamation of races than was going on in the scattered population of the country. The biographer who speaks familiarly of Gilbert's French connexions, speaks also of his “taking part in the affairs of the corporation,” and serving the office of sheriff; which would scarcely happen to a new settler. And only on this supposition can we reconcile the legend of the pilgrimage to Palestine with the French descent; for it is incredible that the emigrant from Rouen or Caen, if he did not bring a wife with him, would be sufficiently youthful and adventurous to undertake a journey to Jerusalem. It is permitted to the historian to rejoice only in the elimination of the doubtful; yet may he congratulate the lovers of the marvellous and touching, that the

* See vol. i. of Dr. Pauli's History of England under the Plantagenets.

† Thierry, book ix.

‡ Norman Conquest, book xi.

story of Gilbert and Matilda is still an accepted prelude to the life of their illustrious son. However disputed his pedigree, the purple atmosphere of eastern romance yet surrounds his parentage. And dearer to the imagination becomes that investiture when viewed in comparison with the prodigies that haunt his cradle. Before he was born, his mother dreamed that she carried in her womb the great Church at Canterbury,—and again, that on his little bed lay a coverlet which would not be fully unfolded even in the wide market-place of Smithfield. On the night of his birth his father's house and a great part of the city were burnt; and around his baby-brow played the semblance of a bishop's crown. The verity of these stories we need not examine,—albeit they are told by the same grave chroniclers to whom we are indebted for the legend we should be so reluctant to discredit. The difference of our faith in this instance is simply the difference between the marvellous and the incredible. The love of women works marvels daily, in our own sight—the destiny of infants is prefigured by supernatural portents only in the twilight of superstition, or the dawn of a new dispensation.

CHAPTER II.

THE LONDON OF GILBERT A'BECKET.

FITZSTEPHEN, the principal of Becket's biographers, has prefixed to his "Life and Passion" a description of the city whose highest honour he counted it to have given birth to the future saint and martyr—and justifies himself by the example of Sallust, who, when about to write the history of the Roman wars in Africa, wrote first an account of Africa itself. It needed not an example so antique to commend a method so natural and excellent;—for surely the stream of narration that should, like a river, run clear and fast, should also, like a river, reflect the city or the country through which it takes its way.

The London into which Thomas a'Becket was born—about the year 1117 A.D., and therefore in the reign of Henry Beauclerk—was not exactly the London on which gazed, with greedy admiration, the Norman visitors to Edward the Confessor. Conspicuous changes had taken place at either end of the city. The abbey, church, and palace of Westminster, which that now sainted monarch founded, and so far advanced as to find within the "incom-

parable structure”* a residence and a shrine,—were now companioned, or rather confronted, by the Hall of Rufus; designed by that least Norman of the Normans for no higher uses than the banquet, but destined to an historical celebrity unrivalled as its architectural nobility. The little Isle of Thorney, the site of the royal and sacred pile, had no longer to be reached by a ferry—a bridge to the mainland had been built by Matilda, Henry’s queen. At the other extremity of the capital rose in gloomy strength the Tower, which William had rebuilt on the ruins of its plain predecessor. The wall which in the Saxon time ran along the river’s northern edge, from the Tower to Ludgate,—broken by Belinsgate (Billingsgate) below bridge, and Queenhythe above—had yielded to the encroachments of the tide, and, being considered unnecessary for purposes of defence, had not been restored. The bridge itself was not the same as that which Roman, Saxon, and Norman are supposed successively to have traversed—for which Olave and Ethelred made dreadful conflict with the Dane, but through which the wily Canute forced his ships. That immemorial thoroughfare, with its guardian fortresses, chapel, and dwellings, was swept away on the night of November 16, 1091, by a rush of the waters, caused by a tempest of wind which also carried away six hundred houses and several churches. Nor was it that more famous, if less venerable, old London Bridge which was standing seven hundred

* Fitzstephen.

years later. That was of stone, and was not commenced till the year 1176. This, like its predecessor, was of wood, and was destined to early destruction by an antithetic agent—the fire which in 1136, beginning at the house of one Ailward, near London-stone, Cannon Street, raged from St. Paul's to Aldgate. On three sides of the city, the old Roman wall was extant and unimpaired—a wall “high and thick,” with “seven double gates”^{*}—namely, Postern, Aldgate, Bishopsgate, Moorgate, Cripplegate, Aldersgate, and Ludgate. Issuing from and connecting these gates, ran the great eastern, northern, and western roads, and the intramural thoroughfares, Watling Street, Cornhill, and Chepe, nearly as at present. Less than a mile from Ludgate, and connected with it by a tolerable road,—crossing by a bridge the river Fleet, or river of Wells,—was “the populous suburb” of St. Clement Dane; where lived the peaceful and fast amalgamating descendants of the countrymen of Canute. About a mile further west was the village of Charing, whence the road conducted by a curve to the Isle of Thorney, where the learned king sat on certain days to administer justice; but whither suitors usually preferred to go by the “silent highway of Thames.” On the margin of the stream, between the City and the West Minster, other fortress palaces were rising up; the strongholds and mansions of a nobility not too brave for caution, and not too rude for the appreciation of such home comforts as the

^{*} Fitzstephen.

domestic architecture of the age could provide. Behind these were the smooth and shelving banks of the river, the site of future palaces, and subsequently of the best frequented streets in Europe. Further back were corn-fields and meadows,—the gleaming waters of Holy Well, and of Old Bourne—now long since corrupted into Holborn,—and the pleasant expanse of Smoothfield, already a market, and afterwards to degenerate into loathsome Smithfield. Close in the rear rose the political priory of St. John of Jerusalem—of which a church and gateway still remain. On the high ground to the north were “many mills,” with a background of “immense forests, woods, and groves,” the habitation of beasts and game; under which latter denomination were included boars and wild bulls. On the north-east lay a “vast lake”—the site of modern Moorfields and Finsbury. To the east, it is doubtful whether either inclosed fields or groups of habitations were to be seen; except the eye could reach to the hamlet of Stebonheath, with its church of St. Dunstan, and its scattered maritime population. But on the south side of the river, a considerable village skirted the entrance to the great Kentish road along which Cæsar had marched from Dover, the Saxon from the Isle of Thanet, and William from Hastings; and by which the majority of travellers now entered the capital of this thrice conquered but still independent kingdom.

The population of London at this time Fitzstephen describes as “numerous,” and indicates his estimate of that adjective by adding—“so that in the time of

the civil wars under king Stephen, when those who were qualified for military service went out to a review, they were reckoned at twenty thousand armed cavalry, and sixty thousand infantry." According to the ordinary proportion of adult males to women and children, this would give a total of at least two hundred thousand; a conclusion not only improbable in itself, but contradicted by the statement of Peter of Blois, who estimated the whole population in a subsequent reign at only forty thousand. The monk may be better trusted in the ecclesiastical department of statistics. "There are," he says, "in London and the suburbs, thirteen large conventual churches; besides smaller parish churches to the number of one hundred and twenty-six." Most conspicuous of these, by reason of its tall spire, not then common to the edifice it serves so well to indicate and adorn, as well as most ancient, was the episcopal church of St. Paul—"once metropolitan," but superseded in that dignity, as we have seen, by Canterbury. The famous cross was not yet set up; though its site was already a place of popular assemblage. To three of the churches were attached schools, "famous for their privileges and ancient dignity;" and on holydays the magistrates held "festive meetings" at these schools, when the scholars entertained them by exhibitions of scholarship and wit. On "the day called carnival" a more objectionable sort of sport was indulged on the academic floor—every scholar bringing his master a fighting-cock, and the whole morning being given

up to seeing the cocks fight. The after part of the day was devoted to foot-ball, in "the fields under the city walls;" the scholars of each faculty and the followers of every occupation playing separately—while their fathers and mothers looked on with well-pleased gravity from their saddles. On certain other days—"every Sunday in Quadragesima," specifies the ante-puritanic priest—the noble youths themselves mounted on horseback, and went forth in swarms to contest equestrian prizes; while the sons of meaner citizens exercised themselves with spear and shield, and even boys waged a mimic war with wooden weapons. To these entertainments the court contributed both competitors and spectators,—“the king himself being not far off.” Every earl, baron, knight, or noble churchman, who chanced to be “in the city” on a Friday, moreover, went to Smoothfield to see the show of horses for sale; which included chargers, and palfreys, and unbroken colts, as well as the “vulgar steeds” now alone to be seen there. The meadows and marshes further north were the scene of entertainments that varied with the season—in the summer, archery and dancing, the latter by moonlight; in the winter, bull or bear baiting, and skating. Reckless of limb, and even of life, their sports upon the ice were rendered additionally perilous by the use of iron-shod staffs, with which these inheritors of “an age that covets glory” struck at each other as they swiftly passed and re-passed. In Lent, they had river sports, distinguished by a like rude energy and contempt of pain

or danger,—such as striking, from the prow of a boat in motion, at a target, by which the spearman was almost sure to be overthrown and immersed;—the bridge or quays being crowded with people, “whose business it was,” says the monk, “as if anticipating the modern description of a comic performance,—“whose *business* it was to laugh.” But beside these, there were periodical exhibitions free from danger, if not from dulness, and designed to instruct in other than the arts of warfare—namely, religious plays; “representations of the miracles which the holy confessors wrought, or of the sufferings by which the constancy of the martyrs was proved. One of these was performed annually, by the parish clerks of London, at the place of springs which then came to be known as Clerkenwell; and which was the scene of the conference between Richard the First and the Patriarch of Jerusalem. And among the pleasures of the city, though not among its entertainments, must be named those other “choice fountains of water, sweet, wholesome, and clear, bubbling forth among the glistening pebble stones,” whither resorted on summer evenings the youths and maidens to “take the air.”

The streets of the city presented at this time, in its perfection, a peculiarity of which some traces yet remain. The trades had each its own quarter, and much of their business was carried on in the open air. “Those who practise each particular profession,” says Fitzstephen “as well as the sellers of each separate merchandise, and those

who expose the several products of their labour, locate themselves every morning in places as distinct as their occupations." Horses were not the only article of traffic at Smoothfield. It was a market for all agricultural produce, and probably for all commodities most in request on the farm. The river side appears to have been the principal mart. Our monkish historian resorts to a poetic generality to cover his ignorance or disregard of commercial details:—"To this city, out of every nation under heaven, resort merchants with their merchandise brought from beyond the sea.

"Arabia sends her gold, Saba its frankincense,
Seythia her arms, and rich-soil'd Babylon
Her oil of palms, the Nile its precious stones,
China her purple vests, Gallia her wines,
Norwegians, Roosians, send their grieze and sables."

But on one particular he is unctuously explicit:—"There is, moreover, in London, a public cookshop, among the wines which are set for sale in the vessels and the wine-cellars. Here you will get every day, according to the season, all kinds of meats and dishes, roast, baked, fried, and boiled; fish, both great and small; flesh of a common sort for the poor, but more delicate for the rich; venison, poultry, and game. If any one of the citizens is surprised by a visit from his friends, tired by their journey, and disinclined to wait till fresh food can be bought and cooked to allay their hunger,

Whilst ready menials bred in baskets bring, "
Towels for their hands, and water from the spring;

some one runs down to the quay, where he finds everything they want. Whatever may be the multitude of soldiers or foreigners who enter the city or leave it, at any hour of the day or night, there is no need that the former should come in to fast, or the others set out on an empty stomach; down to the quay they go if they like, and each there gets what he wants. Indeed, those who like to take care of themselves need not look about for pheasants or quails from Africa or Ionia, when they see what dainties will here be set before them. This, then, is the public cookshop, and it is as beneficial to the city as it is useful in promoting civility." It is clear that, to the monk Fitzstephen, the original Belinsgate Ordinary was the very chiefest of London sights and charms.

To its citizens, we would gladly believe, there was nothing subordinate in interest and value,—nothing so much an object of pride and affection, as its traditional and chartered freedom. We have seen that it was the heart of Saxon England,—that only by cutting the arteries which united it with the north and east, could the Norman ensure the subjection of the island whose king he had slain on the southern shore,—that it surrendered not to the victorious soldier, but to the fair-speaking statesman, who strove to govern them by their ancient laws. A hundred years have elapsed between the coronation of William and the rise of Gilbert a'Becket. Through that century of cruel tyranny and devastating struggle, England has undergone a melancholy change;

—fruitful fields have been converted into hunting-grounds,—villages are depopulated, and castles multiplied,—the natural, and even the religious sanctuaries of patriotism ruthlessly invaded ;—but London had increased in wealth, and not diminished its freedom. The Saxon hustings have given place to the Norman Guildhall ; but the old spirit lives in the new forms ; the foreign element is even absorbed by the native. The city whose crests are enriched by the produce of all climes, defends its liberties by sons adopted from all races ; from the loins of a citizen of Rouen and a princess of the orient, is born in its streets one destined to serve in its sheriffs' offices, and to curb, from the high altar, the power of its foes.

CHAPTER III.

EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT.

WHETHER we accept or reject the legend of the loves of Gilbert and Matilda,—whether, as is not likely, we believe that portents heralded and attended the birth of their son, or resolve them into myth,—we cannot doubt that he was from childhood educated for distinction in the Church. It is expressly said by an anonymous biographer of good authority,* “he was destined from his infancy to the spiritual warfare, and his parents took measures accordingly to give him a liberal education.” We know from his own testimony, in a letter to his friend John of Salisbury, that his mother was not only a devout woman, but devout after a manner which the Catholic church alone encourages, and which enriches that church above all else with the love of her female members,—that from his mother he learnt not only to “fear the Lord,” but to reverence, next to her Divine Son, the holy Virgin Mary, to adopt her as his patroness, and frequently to invoke her name. By the same plastic hand his character was early moulded after those images of charity which were

* Lambeth MS.

the natural types of saintship in the ages of a simple civilization. His mother used, we read, at certain times of almsgiving, to put her little son in one scale, and in the other scale as much bread, meat, and clothing as would weigh him down; and so the bigger he grew, the heavier were her gifts to the poor. Happy mother! her heart so full of maternal love that neither to heaven nor earth can she spare a thought that does not glance through her son. Happy child! for whose future saints and angels are solicited, and the favour of mankind bespoke.

Matilda did not live to witness in her son's elevation to sacerdotal and civil dignities, the fulfilment of those prophecies which her heart had chaunted over him—a perpetual Magnificat, as is every mother's joyful pride—as he lay in her bosom, or learned at her knee. One biographer says that she lived till he was twenty-one; others speak of her as dying when he was but a child. But we can well imagine that she would see in an incident like this,—as indeed do those who relate it,*—an additional proof of her son's internal guardianship and lofty destiny. He was riding out, hawking, with a guest of his father's—"a certain knight called Richard de Aquila;" crossing a foot-bridge over a mill stream, Thomas's horse stumbled. He was thrown into the stream—and, eager to save the bird that had dropped from his waist, was fast approaching the mill wheel. His destruction seemed inevitable,—but the mill

* Roger de Pontigny and Edward Grim.

stopped with miraculous suddenness, and he was drawn out by the miller, who had no doubt heard an outcry, and promptly checked his machine.

That Becket's father shared in the anticipations we have ascribed to the mother, is probable from the boy's being sent for education to Merton Priory—a monastery of great reputation as a religious seminary;* and if we may credit an anecdote told by one who could easily verify, and who would scarcely have invented it, the presentiment was stronger than his sense of paternal dignity. He went one day, the story runs, to see his son at the monastery; and when the boy was introduced, the father prostrated himself at his feet; at which the prior called him a foolish old man—but the father justified himself, in private, saying, “That boy of mine will one day be great in the sight of the Lord.”

Some time after leaving Merton he studied at Paris; some have said at Oxford*—but if so, the circumstance has escaped notice by his contemporaries, and detection by the industrious Anthony Wood. How long he remained at Paris, or to what particular studies he there applied himself, is not known. On his return, he is recorded to have been made clerk and accountant to the sheriffs of London, of whom his father had been one. A little later in life he is represented as entering, in a similar capacity, the household of one man, “Osbern, surnamed Octonuncia, a rich man, and

* Fitzstephen.

related to the family of the Becket's." We read of his father's having suffered about this time heavy losses by "frequent fires;" and perhaps the two circumstances were co-related. His most useful friends, however, were two priests—Baldwin and Eustace—who, like the knight with whom he went a hawking, lodged at his father's house; and offered to introduce him to the notice of archbishop Theobald, lately promoted from the abbey of Bec to the primacy of England, and, like his predecessors in that path to lofty preferment, a warm patron of intelligence and learning. They who tell us this, tell us also that the young man was for a long time reluctant thus to be put in the way of advancement—from which we conjecture that either he preferred to continue in the civil employments to which he was already addicted, or that he disliked to owe his first advancement in life to the favour of others. His after career would bear out both these interpretations. Not till he is actually consecrated archbishop shall we find in him that devotion to priestly duties which might be expected from the son of Matilda, a votary of Mary, and the pupil of Merton Priory; but at nearly every step shall we see the workings of that noble spirit of independence which once expressed itself in the splendid avowal, that "he gloried rather to be one in whom nobility of mind constituted his birthright, than one in whom nobility of birth had degenerated;" a boast and a taunt that expresses the whole difference between the feeble heirs of privilege and

the aspiring sons of the unprivileged. But, alas! not the proudest is absolute master of his destiny; and Becket had probably the mortification to owe to the discrimination of Theobald alone, employments which provoked the jealous anger of other loiterers in the archiepiscopal court, and which he would have rather earned by independent service. But if ambition rather than independence were his master passion, it must have been largely gratified—for before he was ordained deacon, he had obtained the livings of St. Mary le Strand, and of Olleford, Kent, with prebends in the cathedrals of London and Lincoln. He attended the archbishop* to Rome, and obtained the friendship of the pope and his whole court—received permission, probably, while thus in Italy, to study civil law for a year at Bologna and Auxerre—and on his return was ordained deacon, and made archdeacon of Canterbury, one of the highest of subordinate church offices; to which were added the provostship of Beverley and the prebendary of Hastings.

The biographers who relate with expressions of admiring astonishment this rapid advancement to the dubious dignities of a pluralist, relate also anecdotes which indicate a very rare fitness for the discharge of multifold duties, and the endurance of seductive triumphs. Conscious, or perhaps un-

* Fitzstephen makes Becket himself the envoy to Rome; but Roger de Pontigny mentions him as only one of Theobald's retinue—a far more probable story. Lord Campbell even speaks of this diplomatic prodigy as being entrusted with "two delicate negotiations;" but there is at any rate no evidence of Becket's going twice to Rome in this period of his life.

pleasantly reminded, of his inferiority in learning to his new associates in Theobald's palace, Becket repaired this deficiency with great diligence; and, which is still higher praise, disarmed by sweetness of temper the jealousy he could not but provoke. One of his distempered rivals nicknamed him, and otherwise so grievously wronged him, that he was himself twice dismissed by the archbishop; but Becket obtained his recall. Nor did he omit to practise, among influences not very favourable to high morality, the virtues inculcated by his saintly mother—especially delighting to befriend the poor. His chastity is equally well attested,—though his want of it was alleged against him from this stage of his career; and it is a virtue which his age and temperament would not render easy. The scattered lines of description that have come down to us authorize us to think of him as tall in stature, graceful and vigorous in limb, with a countenance handsome in serenity and fascinating in expression, a nose slightly aquiline, and a mouth framed to habitual soft, swift speech.

Such was the man whom the young king Henry, in 1055, the second year of his reign, appointed his chancellor. At whose commendation, to what duties, and how they were fulfilled, the reader is not yet in a position to understand.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHANCELLOR AND COURTIER.

PROMOTION by favour is usually considered the antithesis of promotion by merit. The truer antithesis would be, promotion by privilege. Autocracy is as little interested as democracy in the repression of low-born ability. It is under the government of the few—whether calling itself by the pompous misnomer, “Aristocracy;” or made justly odious by the designation, “Oligarchy”—that the natural rights of intellect, and the paramount necessities of the public service, are systematically sacrificed to considerations of private, family, or party interest. Hence the frequency and conspicuousness of great names in the annals of absolutely despotic and of absolutely free states—their comparative paucity in those of mixed monarchies and quasi-republics; the nurseries of mediocrity, the prison-houses of genius. Hence, especially, the number and brilliancy of the names which even in the darkest of the middle ages shone in the firmament of the church—that theocratic democracy whose worst abuses could only obscure, not destroy, its presentation of that Divine idea which heathen philosophy named “the

monarchy of man ;” and whose unfaithfulness will not prevent its being the mother of that human perfectness which a Christian Father visioned as “the city of God.” Free from the subtlest of those influences which must sometimes bias the purest and the strongest, ecclesiastics had little motive to prefer other than the fittest to posts within their gift ; and when service was to be rendered to the pope a little at the expense of less sacred potentates, they were especially unlikely to put forward the eldest of the brethren merely because he was the eldest. And secular princes, on the other hand, were but too glad to avail themselves of servants, at once superior in art and alien in interest, to the temporal nobility ; who, on their part, however resolute to impose their counsels, and gratify their ambition, were willing enough to resign the toils of administration.

It is thus we account for the otherwise inexplicably sudden elevation of Becket to the highest of civil dignities. The church desired to strengthen her influence with the sovereign—the sovereign was open to offers of friendship and service. It was not by accident that Becket attracted the attention, and secured the favour of the king. It is expressly stated by the authorities whom we shall presently name, that it was by the influence of Theobald—himself advised by Henry of Winchester, Philip of Bayeux, and Ernulf of Lisieux—that he was appointed chancellor within a year of Henry’s accession. The first-named of these prelates was the

brother of Stephen, the late king; and one of the most astute politicians of that troublous time. He foresaw danger to the church, and possibly to the kingdom, in the youthful years, violent spirit, and disputed claims of the new king; and he saw in Becket a fascinating associate and an able minister. The amiable Theobald was not likely to resist an opinion so flattering to his own sagacity,—and the king was under obligations to the primate, who had in more than formality set the crown upon his head; for one of the two objects of the mission to Rome in which Becket at any rate assisted, was to obtain a prohibition of the coronation of Eustace, son of Stephen. Had it been an inferior office in which they wished to place their protégé, they might have purchased it—but, for reason of its importance, says a contemporary writer, “the chancellorship is never sold for money.” Its functions included the custody of the royal seal; the control of the king’s chapel, and of all his ecclesiastical patronage; and a seat at the council, “even without being summoned.” We cannot believe that Henry would have bestowed so large a gift simply at the request even of Theobald. It is at any rate clear that he very soon appreciated both the personal and official qualities of his chancellor. One says, “They played together like boys;” another, “There never were two better friends in all Christendom.” The only story that bears out the former representation is that of their struggling on horseback, in a city thoroughfare, for a new and costly cloak,

which Henry had pulled from Becket's shoulders, to bestow, with a truly royal generosity, upon a tattered passer-by. The disparity between their ages would alone forbid the intimacy of youth, Becket being fourteen years older than Henry. But we may credit what we read of their dining, hawking, hunting, and chess-playing together. "The king sometimes rode on horseback into the hall where the chancellor was sitting at table, with an arrow in his hand, as on his return from hunting, or on his way to the forest; sometimes he would drink a cup of wine, and, when he had seen the chancellor, take his departure; at other times he would jump over the table, sit down, and eat with him." When severely ill, at St. Gervais, both Henry and the king of France went to see him; and as soon as convalescent, he solaced himself for his seclusion from their sports by putting on a falconer's "cape with sleeves," and pursuing on the board the mimic war.

It is equally undisputed that the popular voice applauded the young monarch's choice of a minister—and that the suitors for justice, which the first Henry was accustomed to dispense in person at Westminster, were well content that the second of his name should leave its administration to the chancellor, who presided in the *Ante Regis*.* Admiration was excited by Becket's celerity in rebuilding the palace, which had "become almost a ruin,"—"such marvellous

* "The office of Grand Justiciar," observes Lord Campbell, "does not appear to have been filled up during Becket's chancellorship."

rapidity that this great work was finished between Easter and Whitsuntide;" admiration being none the less that the carpenters and other workmen made so much din in their haste, that "even those who were standing close together could hardly hear one another speak." Still more satisfactory were the promptitude and courage with which he put down the predatory bands whom the late civil wars had encouraged; especially one William of Ypres, a Fleming, who had established himself by sea and land in Kent—demolished the castles which had been built by refractory barons, alike to the defiance of the crown and terror of the people—restored to dispossessed families their lawful inheritance—and remitted the punishment to which thousands had exposed themselves by infringement of the forest laws. So early and energetic were these changes effected, that they have been ascribed to the king's independent activity; but there is little room to doubt that they were executed at Becket's instance, if not by his actual authority—and no doubt at all that they harmonize with his entire administration, and are also in harmony with the genius, both of the man and churchman. During the seven years of Becket's chancellorship, says Fitzstephen, "the king, by the blessing of Him who is the King of kings, succeeded in all he undertook; the realm of England became richer and richer, and copious blessings flowed from plenty's horn; the hills were cultivated, the valleys teemed with corn, the fields with cattle, and the folds with sheep."

His latest biographer mentions that at West Tarring, in Sussex, is a rectory, where he is said to have planted a fig-tree, brought from Italy, and the parent of the species which grows so plentifully in that county. England at large is sown with similar proofs that the church of that age was the great husbandman and the great artificer—the builder of bridges; the maker of roads; the founder of schools, hospitals, and even cities. What else was the church of that age, we shall see exemplified in the acts and sufferings of her great son and saint, the future archbishop of Canterbury. But while the archbishop is still in the future, we must observe the chancellor in his daily life, and afterwards accompany him, as envoy and soldier, to France.

Fitzstephen's well-known description of Becket's housekeeping is provokingly incomplete,—suggesting, but little more than suggesting, a curious picture of English society in the twelfth century. “The house and table of the chancellor were common to all of every rank who came to the king's court, and needed hospitality; whether they were honourable men in reality, or at best appeared to be such.” It would aid the imagination to realize this bounteous hospitality, if the situation and extent of the house had been indicated. The king's court was sometimes at the Tower, sometimes at Westminster; and unless Becket kept up an establishment at either end of the capital, his table would not be very accessible to the invited earls and barons, without whose company “he never dined.”

That he was warder of the Tower might fix there the locality, if he had not also rebuilt the "palace of London,"—a designation applied by the same writer to the royal residence at Westminster. The capacity of the building must have been enormous—for, besides the multitude of daily guests, there were the young nobles, whose fathers had sent them to serve in the chancellor's house; and he was "followed by so large a retinue of soldiers and persons of all ranks, that the royal palace seemed empty in comparison." But whatever the site or size of the chancellor's mansion, the rude simplicity of its structure is indicated by the amusing circumstances enumerated among the instances of his dainty splendour. "He ordered his hall to be strewed every day in winter with fresh straw and hay, and in summer with green branches, that the numerous knights, for whom the benches were insufficient, might find the ground clean and neat for their reception, and that their valuable clothes and beautiful shirts might not contract injury from its being dirty." Enough is known now of the domestic architecture of the Anglo-Normans to enable us to elaborate these outlines. Let us imagine, then, on the eminence behind the city fortress, or in the more rural and hallowed shades of the wooded banks where rise the abbey and the palace, a spacious but not lofty structure—slightly elevated on covered arches, which serve both as cellarage and basis, the walls of marble, flint, and mortar, rugged to the eye, but impervious

to the elements; the windows chiefly mere arrow slits, offering easier admission to wind than light; the main entrance, a rounded doorway high enough to admit man and horse. Another court running the long length of the building, and planted with such fruit trees and flowering shrubs as have yet enriched the native poverty of our soil, serves as a spacious ante-room for servitors and suitors. The grand doorway lets the visitors at once into the principal apartment of the dwelling,—“the hall,” some twenty feet high, and fifty deep, where the chancellor and his most honoured guests sit at a table upon the dais, or low platform, at the upper end; the multitude of visitors and retainers on benches running from top to bottom; and the late comers, or meaner sort, squatting upon the littered floor of wood or earth. Over the dais, looking east, is a window of some pretensions,—the trefoil and cross traceable in the stone framework; the small interstices of the wood and iron filled up with horn or rough glass, which began to be used about this time. Chimneys, too, are coming to be a feature of great honour. The hall boasts one vast fire-place,—the wood smoke from which rolls up its legitimate aperture; while braziers stationed in distant parts of the room send up slender columns that festoon the rafters with grimy wreaths. Breaks in the wall, veiled by curtains, communicate with the kitchens and chambers; besides which, except perhaps for the chancellor's private business and devotion, there are no other rooms. All are upon the ground floor,

and are for the most part rather spacious than comfortable. Few of the sleepers in the princely house can obtain the luxury of an entire hutch, or curtained bed. A couch by the wall, a bundle of straw, or even a resting place on the floor of the hall not yet swept out, must suffice for the great majority. For ablutions, the favoured have baths—pits dug in the floor, and inlaid with tiles; for the rest there are buckets, the adjacent Thames, or the nearest moat. But the crypt contains good store of meat and drink, with costly plate and vessels—at least for the upper table, for to that we must limit “the board” which is said to have “shone with gold and silver, and abounded with rich dishes and precious liquors.” Though it seems incredible that Becket should at any time have given five pounds—a sum calculated as an equivalent to seventy-five pounds of modern money—for “a single diet of eels,” he must have sometimes paid large sums for “the objects of consumption recommended by their vanity,” for which his table is explicitly declared to have been famous. But all the wealth of that age was as inadequate to provide plenty of good food for the chancellor’s host of clients,—the dainty young Norman knights, and the gluttonous Saxon monks,—as to have spread his floor with a modern carpet. Peter of Blois has left us a description of court fare in his day—only thirty years later—which can leave no doubt as to the normal poverty, not to say nastiness of twelfth century diet. The bread, he says, was black and lumpy; the wine sour; the beer so thick that it

had to be filtered through the teeth; the meat seldom fresh; and fish so scarce as to fetch a high price whether sweet or stinking. The fertility and fatness, which Fitzstephen unctuously ascribes to the Divine blessing on Becket's administration, were in fact comparative. England had been so wasted by a century of conquest and civil wars; so many fair fields had been taken from the ploughman to make hunting grounds for his foreign master,—that periodical famine and permanent dearth had succeeded to the happy plenty of the good old times, when the Saxon was but too well fed. If the gentles, in silken doublet and hose, pointed shoes, and feathered cap, had to put up with sour bread and rancid wine in their place at the dais, we may be sure that the churls in woollen jerkin, and hoseless sandals, fared appropriately to their seat with the dogs. And often would the uninvited guests at the chancellor's table be right glad to carry away "the rich alms which it provided for those who partook thereof."

That he still practised the charity so whimsically inculcated by his mother, there is various evidence. Some of his contemporaries allude with pride, and some with censure, to his stateliness and magnificence; but none deny that "he was himself singularly frugal" and unostentatiously benevolent. The kindness of heart in which he had been nurtured, and which is indeed instructive to the conscious possessor of great powers, he carried into the exercise of his official prerogatives. "He was humble to the

humble," says one, "but to the proud he was stern and haughty." "The poor and oppressed found ready access to him," says another; "the cause of the widow did not come before him in vain; he gave justice and protection to the weak and needy." "The vacant bishoprics and abbacies which he filled up, instead of allowing their revenue to be paid into the royal treasury, he bestowed readily on deserving persons." "There never passed a day on which he did not make large presents." And he "gave his gifts with such a grace that all the Latin world loved him and delighted in him." But he did not permit these easier and natural virtues to excuse him from the practice of the more vigorous and special. He was chaste as well as temperate, just as well as generous, and pious according to the requirement of the deacon rather than of the chancellor. He not only punished one of his household, who, a clerk and of high birth, carried off the wife of a friend, but defeated the attempt to surprise himself in sensual enjoyment. He practised penance and mortification, "often baring his back in private to the scourge," and wearing the hair shirt of an anchorite under the soft raiment of a courtier. He not only induced the king to recall from banishment persons of character and bearing, but had the courage to withstand the monarch's anger. Nicolas, archdeacon of London, being expelled from his home by the king's orders, his house locked, and his goods put up to sale, "the good chancellor did not rest" till he had procured restitution. On another occasion he showed both

tact and firmness in defeating the royal vindictiveness. The archdeacon of Rouen being offended by the recognition of Pope Alexander, whom Henry (then in Normandy) disclaimed, he sent orders for the destruction of his house. Becket remonstrated, on the pretext of his own convenience, saying—"The house which you are ordering to be destroyed belongs, indeed, to archdeacon Gilo, but it is the house in which I am residing;" and the king withdrew his order. But next day information was brought that the bishop of Le Man had also submitted to the obnoxious pope. The bishop was instantly expelled from his lodgings at Rouen, and warrants sent for the demolition of his house at Le Man. Becket found the king exulting in his intended vengeance, and forbore to interfere, except by instructions to the messengers, to delay their journey. Then he sent in some of the French clergy to entreat the king's forgiveness for their brother, but he was inexorable. Becket next applied himself to the task of pacification, and was repulsed,—but tried again, and was successful; Henry supposing that his warrant had been already executed. But the bearer of his pardon arrived as soon as the messenger of his vengeance, and the irascible monarch recognised in the chancellor the keeper of his honour as well as of his conscience.

CHAPTER V.

THE ENVOY AND SOLDIER.

THE incidents of Becket's employment in France are strikingly illustrative of the relationships which then obtained between European governments. Henry had indicated his estimate of the other sex by a marriage, while Duke of Normandy (1152), with Eleanor, the divorced wife of Louis VII. He thus became Duke of Aquitaine and Earl of Poniton—acquisitions for which he did homage, and took fresh oaths of allegiance, to the released husband, who had in vain forbidden his vassal of Normandy to ally himself with a lady whose reputed unchastity did not outweigh the attraction of her great inheritance. Louis could place little reliance upon the good faith of the powerful subject, since he had violated the provisions of his own father's will, broken his oath of compliance, and made war upon the brother thus dispossessed of Anjou, Maine, and Tourraine. Henry had done this immediately upon his accession to the throne of England, and now, five years later, he laid claim to the countship of Toulouse. About the same time—and possibly to detach the French king from the wars of his weaker

vassals—Henry proposed to espouse his own eldest son, Becket's pupil, to Margaret the daughter of Louis. Becket was entrusted with the negotiation of their not unusually precocious alliance; which appears to have been met, immediately on his arrival in France, with an invitation from Louis to Henry himself. The king of England crossed the channel accordingly, but only to prosecute by vows his claim on the earldom, and make a confederacy in its support. He then returned to England for supplies, and seems to have been very successful in his purpose—for the army with which he presently laid siege to the city of Toulouse is described as including "the chivalry of all England, Normandy, Aquitaine, Anjou, Bretagne, and Scotland." The English chancellor was there, with "seven hundred knights of his own household"—and a brain of such capacity for counsel as to anticipate the bold enterprises of the Edwards against the king of France. Louis, violating his powers of neutrality, had thrown himself into the besieged city—less perhaps as a combatant than as a protector to his sister, the Countess Constance. Becket boldly advised his capture, with that of the town. The king had other advisers, of profounder respect for those rights of feudal sovereignty which Becket declared to have been forfeited by violation of treaty and appearance in arms; and Henry's singular scrupulousness gave time for the relief of the city. The retreating army had to content itself with the capture of a few castles—and of these only the chancellor and Henry of

Essex, of all the English barons, could be induced to take charge, after the kings of England and Scotland had recrossed the channel. Becket even undertook an aggressive or personal warfare; putting himself "in full armour at the head of a stout band of his men," took three other castles which had been regarded as impregnable, passed the Garonne, and secured the entire province to his royal master. In the next campaign he still further distinguished himself. To the seven hundred knights of his own household he now added twelve hundred others, each receiving three shillings a day for their horses and esquires, and themselves dining at his own table,—besides four thousand serving-men, or foot-soldiers. These he commanded in person,—giving the signal to advance or retreat "on one of those slender trumpets which was peculiar to his band, but which were well known to all the rest of the army around." His knights were "everywhere foremost, doing more valiant deeds than any others," and his mercenaries were famous for discipline. But the reputation of a just commander did not content the military ecclesiastics in an age of chivalry. Personal prowess excelled all other merits when war was a series of personal encounters. And not to be wanting in this essential of a mediæval statesman and soldier, Becket one day "charged with lance in rest and horse at full speed against Engelram of Trie, a valiant French knight, who was advancing towards him, and having unhorsed the rider, carried off his horse in triumph."

The campaign in which Becket bore so important a part brought the war to a close. John of Salisbury, writing to him in 1161, thus expresses the common estimate at home of the chancellor's position:—"Those who have returned say, and I would it were true, that the king and court are governed entirely by your advice, and that the peace depends upon your advocacy." It may therefore be assumed, that Becket counselled the resumption of the negotiations which had been interrupted by the war, and which he was entrusted to conclude. His biographers, however, dwell less upon the skill than upon the splendour of his embassy. Fitzstephen's amusing description of the state with which he journeyed through Normandy is almost too well known to require repetition. The two hundred knights and serving-men, all on horseback and in "new holiday clothes"—the long procession of sumpter mules—the huntsmen and followers, with "dogs and birds of all kinds"—the eight carriages, each drawn by five horses, and serving as kitchen, pantry, plate chests, bedchambers, etc.—the "large dog" tied below, and the long-tailed ape riding above—the running footmen, singing as they went, "after the fashion of their country," make up an English historical picture, as rare as it is grotesque and familiar. The reported comment of observers—"What a remarkable man the king of England must be, if such a great man as this is his chancellor!"—may be taken to indicate the object of all this show. It was not to gratify his own lusts

for magnificence, not to promote purposes of state, that Becket dazzled the eyes of the vulgar. It seems to have been his policy to lower the French king in the estimation of his own subjects by comparison with the Anglo-Norman. He anticipated the hospitality of the court, and purchased its adherence. He rendered futile the king's power to prevent expense to the embassy,—sending emissaries to buy up secretly provisions enough for a thousand men. It was here, too, he went to the fabulous extravagance of paying a hundred shillings for a dish of eels. And now was seen the special object of his cumbrous mode of travel. He gave away all his gold and silver,—his bundle of rich clothing,—his dogs, birds, and rarest horses. Not the least characteristic of his benefactions was the present of books which he made to the master and pupils of the French schools. There he obtained “golden opinions from all sorts of people,” and was assisted in the accomplishment of his mission. The hand of the princess Margaret was obtained for the prince Henry, and the claim of Eleanor's husband to Toulouse was admitted.

Returning with a diminished train to the Anglo-Norman court, the successful envoy performed the romantic and useful service of capturing a brigand-like baron, named Guy de la Val. His embassy was concluded some time in 1160; and it is not till 1162 that we find him again in England, commissioned by the king, who remained in Normandy, to have the crown set upon the head of the pupil he had provided

with a bride, and to exact oaths of allegiance from the nobility to their sovereign's eldest son. But before another meeting with his royal master and friend, he whose career has been hitherto so signally bright, will have entered on the clouded though lofty path that leads through civil strife to a cruel death.

CHAPTER VI.

ELEVATION TO THE PRIMACY.

IT appears to have been in the castle of Forlaise that the chancellor received the first authoritative hint of his destined translation to the headship of the church. Archbishop Theobald had died in April of 1161,—and till the spring of the year 1162, the king gave no sign of his intention to appoint a successor. The ostensible business on which he then sent his chancellor to England, was the crowning of prince Henry, and the suppression of disturbances on the Welsh frontier; “but,” said he, in a private conversation on the night before Becket’s departure,—which Becket must have repeated to the clerk who records it, Herbert de Boshaen,—“you do not yet know the real reason for your being sent—it is my intention that you shall be made archbishop.” The chancellor would not have been greatly surprised—for, according to another of his intimates, a travelling prior, visiting him at St. Gervais, remarked on his “cape with sleeves” as becoming an ecclesiastic who held several preferments, and was spoken of for the archbishopric. Now as then, the chancellor pointed to his dress, with a smile of incredulity,

saying, "A pretty costume to figure at the head of the monks of Canterbury." But Becket's was not a mind to confound trivial with essential difficulties. It will be seen presently that he preferred sackcloth to fine linen, when sackcloth had the truer significance. On both these occasions he is reported to have spoken like a sagacious and conscientious man. To the prior of Leicester he said, "I know those poor priests in England, either one of whom I would rather see advanced to be archbishop than myself; for if I were promoted to that rank, so well do I know the lord my king, I should be obliged either to lose his favour, or—which God forbid!—to set aside my duty to my God." To the king he spoke with equal plainness:—"If you do as you say, my lord, your mind will very soon be estranged from me, and you will hate me then as much as you love me now; for you assume at present, and will continue to assume, an authority in church matters which I should not consent to, and there will be plenty of persons to stir up strife between us." Nor were these the expressions of a coy reluctance that waits to be overcome. He would have finally declined the appointment, according to John of Salisbury, who attributes to his friend precisely the sentiments above stated, but for the interference of the Cardinal Henry of Pisa; who plied him with an argument to which the *esprit de corps* is insensible only in meanest minds—the good of the church.

In the May following, there arrived at Canterbury commissioners from the Norman court, the bishops

of Chichester, Exeter, and Rochester, with the abbot of Battle, and Richard de Lucy, the chief justice “bringing the king’s command under his seal to the convent for the prior, with the other monks, to meet the bishops and clergy of England at London, and proceed to the election of an archbishop and primate.” The message was formally delivered in the chapter house, Richard de Lucy acting as spokesman. He informed them that the king left the election of a pastor to their free choice, on condition that they elected a person worthy of the honour, and equal to the burden. There was also an implication of danger in what they were about to do. “The troubles, difficulties, and tumults which may arise, together with the loss of our worldly goods, and the peril to our souls,” if the king and the archbishop should *not* be “united together in the strong bonds of affection;” should *not* “mutually and amicably support one another.” Further admonished by “a sign from the bishops,”—after returning thanks for the royal kindness and solicitude,—the prior retired with some of the elder brethren. They resolved in this committee of selection, that nothing would be done without a more explicit intimation of the king’s wishes. The commissioners, on being called in and made acquainted with the discreet conclusion, named the chancellor. It is to be presumed that proceedings in the chapter house were then resumed, for a discussion followed; “the monks” hesitating some time to give their assent, “not because they did not know Thomas to be a virtuous man, but because he did

not wear the dress of the religious order," after the example of St. Augustine, and his successors in the see of Canterbury. The discussion concluded, however, with an unanimous assent to the nomination; and the commissioners appointed a day for the completion of the election, at a council in London.

To this council were summoned prelates, abbots, priors, earls, barons, and "all the king's officials." It may therefore be regarded as a parliamentary session,—minus those representatives of the towns whose presence was necessary only when money was to be obtained. The prior of Canterbury reported what had been done there, in obedience to the king's mandate. The three commissioners testified to the regularity of the election, and the fitness of the choice. All present gave their consent, and joined in religious thanks. One there was who was known to be non-content,—but it appears that he deemed it prudent to unite in the general congratulation. This was Gilbert Foliot, bishop of Hereford, and afterward of London,—but whether at this time of the former or latter see does not clearly appear. He was a man of advanced age, great learning, and of the monastic profession—qualifications for the primacy which might excuse the ambition he was known to entertain. Ralph de Diceto, archdeacon of London, and subsequently secretary to the king, says distinctly, "Thomas, archdeacon and chancellor, was formally elected to the archbishopric, *no one objecting.*" John of Salisbury, writing to the archbishop, when Foliot had become openly hostile, recalls his conduct

at the election : “ I was myself present at it, and saw it all. He was the solitary individual who did not express pleasure at your nomination. He, as was then evident, and is still abundantly so, had been foremost among the aspirants to your lordship’s see. Yet even he was soon shamed out of his opposition. . . . He was one of the first to give his vote in your favour, and the loudest in his praises of the election.”

The remaining formalities rapidly followed. The assent of the young king—as his father’s representative—was formally asked by the bishops ; and given with expressions of cordial approval. More ominous was the request preferred by Henry of Winchester, in the name of his brethren. The terms of his demand are indicative of Becket’s previous position in the state, as well as of anxiety as to his future. “ My lord the chancellor, our archbishop elect, has for a long time possessed the highest place in the house of the king, your father, and in the whole kingdom, which he has had entirely under his government ; nor has anything been done during your father’s whole reign without his advice and pleasure. We demand, therefore, that he shall be delivered over to us, and to the church of God, free from all civil obligation or service of the court, from all suit, or accusation, or any other matter whatsoever, that from this very hour and ever after he may be at liberty and at leisure to act freely in God’s service.” Prince Henry assented to this also, in his father’s name. But Becket himself, his biographers are careful to record, declared

“that it was impossible for him to serve two masters, whose wills were so much at variance; and that whoever should be archbishop of Canterbury would be sure to offend either God or the king.” Nor was Henry without warning of this sad alternative from other quarters. His mother cautioned him against promoting a useful servant to the position of a rival master. But no time was lost between Becket’s nomination to the primacy and his actual installation. On Whit Sunday,—the writ of election having been previously read in the refectory of the abbey of Westminster,—the new archbishop received priest’s orders, in the cathedral church of Canterbury, from the hands of Walter of Rochester. Shortly afterwards, in the eighth year after his appointment to the chancellorship, he was consecrated by the Henry of Winchester to whom he already owed so much. “A large number of religious men of all ranks,” repaired to Canterbury in time for the ceremony,—and on the day appointed went out, with “an immense multitude of the common people,” to receive, “with every kind of honour and with acclamations of joy,” the new-made priest, who advanced on foot, and with tears in his eyes, to be crowned and anointed. So great was the general delight—says the monk Roger of Pontigny—that no language can describe it; while Thomas was himself burdened with contrition and humility of heart, “thinking less of the honour than of the burden which he was about to take upon him.” Honour or burden, however,—mock reluctance or genuine,—the ceremony

went on to its conclusion. Messengers of fit rank were despatched to that sovereign pontiff whose crowning benediction was yet wanting. They brought away from Rome the pallium which conferred the mystic power it symbolled. They laid it on the high altar of the cathedral church of Canterbury, and then it was taken by the archbishop himself, in exchange for that final oath of allegiance to the successor of St. Peter, which he was one day to ratify in blood.

CHAPTER VII.

PRIVILEGE AND PREROGATIVE.

DESCENDING, now, from the pleasant height of worldly pomp and power, into the vale of spiritual strife and personal suffering, it is important that we estimate more closely than hitherto our means of observation. While Becket was only courtier or chancellor, we had no special interest in scrutinizing the claims of his biographers to credibility. But henceforth we shall find a frequent conflict of statements as well as of actions, and must therefore count and weigh authorities.

They are briefly these:—John of Salisbury (afterwards bishop of Chartres), an intimate friend of Becket; Herbert de Bosham, his secretary; Edward Grim, Roger de Pontigny, and William Fitzstephen—monks who were attendant on the archbishop, more or less constantly. Benedict, abbot of Peterborough; Alan, abbot of Tewkesbury; William, prior (or sub-prior) of Canterbury; Elias, a monk of Evesham; with two anonymous but contemporary writers, have written memoirs of the archbishop, or compiled passages from his correspondence, which form the

basis of all subsequent biographies. The most important of these latter are known as the first and second *Quadrilogies*; the earlier of which was published at Paris in 1495, and the latter at Brussels in 1682. Some additional light is thrown upon the period by the chronicles of Ralph de Diceto, William of Newborough, and Matthew of Paris.

The first point on which arises a difference of opinion, is that of Becket's demeanour immediately subsequent to his consecration. His monkish biographers, intent upon the glorification of an unnatural ideal, set forth, with super-clerical extravagance of diction, a certain change of character, immediately upon that event. "Contrary to the expectations of the king and of all men," says Fitzstephen, "the glorious archbishop Thomas so abandoned the world, and so suddenly felt that change which is the handiwork of the Most High, that it filled all with astonishment." But this "painting with the vermillion rather than with the pen," as one of them expresses it, has done great injustice to its subject. It has been made the ground of a historical calumny no less unjust and unphilosophical than that which, for nearly two centuries, divided the career of Cromwell into that of a fanatic and a hypocrite—honest regicide and crafty liberticide. All such violent bisections disappear before a candid examination of facts, and a charitable construction of motives. Looked at closely, all Fitzstephen's evidences of "conversion" resolve themselves into indications of a natural adaptation to new circumstances. He who as chan-

cellor had delighted in fine garments and a costly housekeeping, hunting and falconry, great company and books of law,—as archbishop wore sackcloth, fared on bread and water instead of meat and wine, submitted his back to the scourge, washed the feet of beggars, doubled his alms, and sat in the cloisters reading books of devotion. But the latter were just as proper to the archbishop as the former to the chancellor. The outward signs of humility and mortification enumerated were so thoroughly professional, that they excited remark only from their contrast to previous characteristics. So far from their being carried to the excess which would alone argue either affectation or fanaticism, there is indisputable evidence of this being accompanied by his old display of wealth and taste. A modern church writer, who has placed the whole twelfth century controversy in a new light, goes so far as to say—“Thomas Becket carried with him, on his entrance into the archiepiscopate, far more of the display of worldly splendour for which he was remarkable as chancellor, than the custom of the times, and the general expectation of his contemporaries, required of him. *After* his advancement, as *before*, his dress and retinue were remarkable for their magnificence—his table for its almost fastidious delicacy, his companions for their rank and intellectual accomplishments—his studies for their political and philosophical rather than their religious character; and the only change discernible in his pursuits and manner of living, was such as the change of his rank and occupations would

necessarily suggest to a refined taste.”* Even two years after his consecration (1165), the unquestionably pious John of Salisbury ventures to remonstrate with his more eminent friend upon the preference of secular and political literature to psalms and sermons; on which it is well remarked, by the writer just quoted—“If John of Salisbury believed the archbishop to be a great saint, he never would have thought this advice either necessary or becoming; if he had regarded him as a hollow pretender to sanctity, he surely would have addressed him in a less affectionate and confidential tone.” And when Becket was in exile, so did the native taste cleave to him, that John of Poitiers counselled a more chastened style of living, as more in keeping with his own condition, and the habits of the religious house in which he found sanctuary. It may well be concluded, therefore, that Becket’s demeanour was at least free from the charge of a hypocritical profession of saintship.

The next point that arises is that of his change of relationship to the king. The popular notion on this head appears to be, that having obtained the primacy by countenancing the royal expectation of his proving a faithful as well as able servant, he insidiously converted it, from motives of personal ambition and pride, into a rival dominion; breaking faith with a generous master, and arrogantly opposing himself to the laws of which he had been the chief administrator. We have seen that there is no ground

* Froude’s Remains, vol. ii.

whatever for the first part of this theory—that so far from seeking the primacy, he as little desired as expected it; accepted the appointment with a reluctance which there is no reason to suspect; and expressly foretold the rupture of his friendship with the king. But here, again, probability as well as testimony is against the ordinary belief. Becket was at any rate well acquainted with the lives of Lanfranc and Anselm,—better still with the troubles of their successors,—and best of all with the character of Henry. It is giving him little credit for the foresight and calculation which should always accompany ambition, to suppose that he anticipated a life of easy power, where all his predecessors had found a seat of thorns. Even had he deliberately resolved to prove traitor to those spiritual principalities which he must solemnly swear to serve, before obtaining the means to serve another, he could scarcely have reckoned upon the quiescence of pope or clergy; the pope, whose anathema would leave him without a subject or a friend; the clergy, whose revolt would paralyze the favour of the king. There is no escape from these difficulties, but in the natural hypothesis that Becket was an honest man,—after the nature of men,—neither a miracle of saintship, nor a prodigy of wickedness; but one of those strong, brave men, to whom resistance is easier than servitude,—who meet events as they come, without timid calculation, though not without some anxious foresight,—who may stoop to dissimulation for a moment, as a soldier may step behind a tree to avoid a momentary

danger too great for him to encounter, but who scorns either to yield or flee in the great, prolonged battle of his life.

Becket's battle with the king began while the latter was still in Normandy. The archbishop sent over his resignation of the chancellorship. Notwithstanding Prince Henry's promise to the bishops, his father betrayed his vexation and anger at this, by requiring Becket to resign also the archdeaconry of Canterbury. Becket complied,—though not, it appears, without some demur at this interference with his ecclesiastical patronage. But he went on to demand the restoration of estates alienated from the see of Canterbury. The law was clearly in his favour, and Fitzstephen states positively that he had also obtained a license from the king. Nevertheless he was called upon to account, in the royal courts, for having rejected the holders of these manors and fee-farms. He refused to plead, except where his right to the property was disputed; alleging that the estates thus resumed were notoriously his own. The prosecution of these claims of course brought him into collision with the nobility,—some of whom, as envious courtiers, were already sufficiently his enemies. One of them was Roger, Earl of Clerc, whom Becket called upon to do homage for Tunbridge, and with whose beautiful sister the king was in love. He also claimed the custody of Rochester Castle; and its possessor went over to Normandy,—with many other malcontents, cleric as well as lay,—to vent their complaints into the royal ear. But on

Henry's return to England at Christmas, Becket, with Prince Henry, met him at Southampton; and the king was so gracious, even affectionate, to his old favourite, that the complainants had to fall in with the general shout of congratulation.

After spending a few days with the king at Runnel, one of his own Kentish coast villages, Becket set sail for Flanders, on his way to Tours, where a general council had been called. Philip, Earl of Flanders, with all the nobility of Normandy and Maine, treated the archbishop with the most cordial honour; and when he approached Tours, "the whole city" went forth to meet him,—strangers as well as citizens,—so that pope Alexander was left with only two cardinals. He was lodged in a royal castle, and treated by the court as their most distinguished guest. The proceedings of the council related chiefly to the sale of benefices and preferments; but Becket found occasion to procure the confirmation of privileges granted by former popes to the church of Canterbury. Returning home, he found the king still friendly; and concurred with him in the translation of Gilbert Foliot from the see of Hereford to that of London. The letter in which Becket communicates this appointment shows his estimation of the post and of the man:—

"THOMAS, BY GOD'S GRACE HUMBLE MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF CANTERBURY, TO HIS VENERABLE BROTHER GILBERT, BY THE SAME GRACE BISHOP OF HEREFORD, HEALTH.

"That the city of London surpasses in grandeur all

the other cities of this kingdom is well known to all of us, my brother: for the business of the whole realm is therein transacted; it is the residence of the king, and frequented more than any other by his nobles. For this reason it is important that the church of London, which has now lost its ruler, should receive for its new bishop a man whose personal merits, attainment in learning, and prudence in managing public business, shall not be unworthy of the dignity of that see. After much deliberation in this matter, it is the unanimous opinion of the clergy, the king, ourself, and the apostolic pontiff, that the general welfare of the kingdom, and the interest of the church, will best be promoted by your being translated to exercise the pastoral care over the diocese of London. . . . And I entreat of you, my brother, that whereas you are bound to this by virtue of your obedience to ourself, so you may be led by your own inclinations to undertake the duty of this important trust. Thus, not only sincere affection, but also proximity of place, will unite us both in the same good work, to give one another mutual assistance in ministering to the necessities of God's church."

Foliot appears to have hesitated,—and it would appear that he refused to make the profession of obedience to the primate required of him at translation. However this may be, Becket wrote another and still more friendly letter,—mingling the highest compliments with the most affectionate epithets,—which may have been influential in overcoming his

objections. Certainly Becket acted in the matter either with the magnanimity which recognises merit in an opponent, or with the wisdom which disarms dislike by kindness.

The dedication of Reading Abbey, and the translation of the remains of Edward the Confessor from an ordinary tomb to the famous shrine at Westminster, were events of sufficient importance to add lustre to the first year of Becket's archiepiscopal reign. We can imagine with what perfection of personal bearing the most poetic of prelates would preside at those festivals of religious pomp, which as far exceed in mental effect all other pageants, as the sacred structure which they filled with rapt spectators exceeds in solemn beauty all other structures. In the days when the stones whose very fragments now fill us with admiring wonder were fresh built up into the long-drawn aisle, and high-embowered roof,—in the days when the bones of the Saxon king were still of power to move the popular heart, and of repute for power to draw down heavenly virtue,—in the days when the abbey was the only safe refuge for scholars from the anger of kings, and for serfs from the famine created by their lords,—when the floor of the church or the steps of the shrine was the only spot at which the conqueror and the conquered could meet without pride or hate,—how must these events, so dim or despicable to us, have looked large and sunk deep. The Berkshire hind and the London 'prentice would hardly think the generation that had seen such sights—though there had

been no murder of Becket, and no conquest of Wales or Ireland—unworthy an historian.

But the year was not yet out. In June, 1162, the favour or policy of the king lifted an archdeacon into the archiepiscopal chair;—in the spring of 1163, the king and his archbishop openly disputed a question of prerogative and common law. In a council held at Woodstock, Henry endeavoured to alter, among other things, the custom of paying to sheriffs annually two shillings for every hide of land in the county, as compensation for their services. The king modestly proposed that this payment should be transferred to the royal exchequer. The council was astonished and offended,—but only the archbishop dared to put the general feeling into language. He respectfully represented that the usage was not a compulsory one, but voluntary,—a means of rewarding the sheriffs if they discharged their duties satisfactorily, but of reprimanding them if otherwise. He replied in anger, and with his favourite oath—*per oculos Dei*—that the payment should forthwith be enrolled among the royal dues; and that the archbishop had no right to oppose his will in this respect. Becket rejoined with the same adjuration, “None of the men on my estate shall ever pay it as long as I am alive.” The king appears to have withdrawn the provocation; “but immediately, began”—says the monk Grim—“to turn his anger against the clergy, because any obloquy which he might throw on them would rebound more especially on the archbishop as their head.” The

biographer evidently means to infer that the question of jurisdiction,—or benefit of clergy,—would not have been raised but for this prior quarrel between the king and the primate. But there were not wanting other causes of irritation. Becket had bestowed the living of Eynesford, a parish in Kent, upon one of his clerks, named Lawrence. But the lord of the manor claimed also the right of nomination, and summarily enforced it by expelling the curate and his servants. Becket defended his clerk by excommunicating the alleged patron,—who, in turn, claimed protection of the king, as his feudal lord. Thereupon Henry wrote to the archbishop, requiring him to grant the Lord William absolution. Becket demurred to this interference with his spiritual authority; but usage required him to consult the royal dignity by an appeal to the king before excommunicating a tenant of the crown,—and Henry refused to see the archbishop until absolution had been granted. Becket complied—feeling, probably, that he had been too hasty; but the king, though pacified, was not reconciled. There were other cases in which Henry was clearly in the wrong,—and in which Becket compelled him to do right. Such were the vacant bishoprics of Hereford and Worcester, which the king kept open, as his predecessors had done, that the revenues might replenish his exchequer. The archbishop could the better remonstrate against this flagrant abuse of the prerogative, because he had opposed himself to it as chancellor; and the vacancies were reluctantly filled

up. And so the minds of these two strong men, long sincere and cordial friends, were mutually inflamed for the approaching encounter on a question of great political magnitude.

The question was this—Were ecclesiastics accused of crime to be subject to the ordinary tribunals? There could be no doubt as to the law of the case. They were explicitly excepted by the act of William the Conqueror—an act at least equally binding upon William's successors with any of the prior usages of English courts. But was it necessary, to the general safety, or to the good estate of the church, that the exception should cease? It is usually taken for granted, by Protestant writers, that the exception was as pernicious in practice as it is certainly contrary to the received principles of social economy. It seems to be forgotten, that, in the ages of which we write, the church was no less a distinct institution than the state,—that it is not just at any time to deprive an institution of its vital functions, unless you are prepared also to destroy its organic existence,—and that an institution or privilege, very pernicious in one age, may be highly beneficial in another. Now, without compromising our own belief that the principle of state-churchism is at no time consistent with the *best* interests either of the church or of the state, we must claim for the principle the fair trial of its largest development, if it is to be tried at all. Such a trial it could not have, unless the members of a spiritual corporation were protected from arrest by secular functionaries,

in an age when the forms of justice were little but the masks of private malice. Who can doubt that a passionate despot, like Henry, and rude robber chiefs, like his nobles, would have set at nought every restraint which the church attempted to lay upon the violence of their lusts, had the representatives of the church enjoyed no spiritual protection? Nor can we find it in our hearts to regret that, at a time when barbarous mutilations were among the lesser penalties of the law, there was a self-governed community whose form of discipline anticipated the discoveries of a century of vaunted philanthropy. Least of all do we see any sufficient evidence that the state of clerical morals at the middle of the twelfth century was such as to require new modes of correction. Admitting, in the absence of proof on either side, the list of “nearly a hundred homicides” committed by clerics within a few years previously to be trustworthy,—it may be pleaded, first, that the term “cleric” embraced a host of church followers, extending to all who could read a Latin sentence; and, secondly, that the period in question had been one of civil war, so ruthless as almost to amount to anarchy. When, therefore, we come to the facts now following, we must not judge of them in isolation from the region in which they stand.

A priest of the diocese of Salisbury, accused of manslaughter, denied the charge, and pleaded his privilege. The bishop put him on his trial, convicted him of the alleged offence, and his metropolitan passed the usual sentence—deprivation of orders,

and confinement for life in a monastery, under strict penance. The next case had a different issue. Philip de Brois, a canon of Bedford, accused of the murder of a knight at Dunstable, was tried by the bishop of London, and acquitted. But the sheriff—having, it is alleged, a private quarrel against the canon—cited him again before one of the king's itinerary justices; in whose presence the canon complained of this persecution, in words that were held to be seditious, or even treasonable. For this new offence he was arraigned before the archbishop, and pleaded guilty, making apology for his heat. The king was so urgent for his punishment, that the court condemned poor Philip to two years' suspension and banishment; and yet, say the chroniclers, "the king was not satisfied." Then came the notorious case of the clerk alleged to have debauched a young lady of Worcestershire, and murdered her father. That he is not likely to have escaped lightly if proved guilty we may judge from the next sentence on record—that of a clerk "deprived of his orders, and branded into the bargain, to please the king," for having stolen a silver cup. These cases appear to have happened in quick succession, and to have reminded the king of one which occurred some years previously; where no default of justice was imputed, but an affront to the king's dignity, and a loss to his exchequer. The consequence of the present case was the convocation of a council at Westminster, which the bishops and abbots attended, in expectation of a decision on the vexed questions between the sees of Canter-

bury and York, recently revived by the Roger whose appointment we have chronicled in passing. It was, therefore, a disagreeable surprise to find that the king intended a formal attack upon one of the most cherished privileges of their order. It opened with a complaint of the rapacity of the clergy, and an assertion of his determination to maintain tranquillity throughout the realm. Then came the demand of assent to the proposal, that clerks convicted of or confessing crime be delivered over to the royal court, "to receive corporal punishment without protection from the church." The archbishop of Canterbury, being personally asked for his assent, requested an adjournment of the council till next day, that he might have time to deliberate. This was refused,—and the bishops withdrew. They were disposed to yield, and some of them even argued in favour of submission, from the Mosaic law that offending Levites were punished with death or mutilation. To these the archbishop replied—The church cannot permit a second punishment to be inflicted on her offending sons without admitting the injustice of her own sentence; "besides which, the liberties of the church are in our keeping, and it is incumbent on us to guard them, or they will be subverted." His timid brethren then argued from their fears. "No danger will result to the church from the loss of her liberties; let them perish at present, rather than that we should all perish; let us do what the king requires, for our escape is cut off, and there will be no one to avenge our death." The primate's rejoinder

was an appeal to their trust in God and to their consciences. "We cannot be justified," he concluded, "in exposing any one of our brethren to death, since it is unlawful for us even to be present at a trial of life and death." Thus the fearful shepherds were persuaded or shamed into courage. Re-entering the royal presence, they declared their duty to the church forbade them to give unqualified assent to the king's demands. Shifting the form of attack, Henry then demanded of them whether they would in all things observe the ancient constitutions of the realm. To this Becket readily answered, "We will in all things, saving always our own order." The question was put to each spiritual peer in turn, and each, as if by preconcert, gave precisely the same answer. Again the question was put to the archbishop, and after him to the suffragans. This time an exception to the unanimity was made by Hilary, bishop of Chichester, who promised without reservation. But this, so far from conciliating the king, drew forth his pent-up passion. He upbraided Hilary, and dismissed the council; though none of the matters for which it had been convoked were accomplished. Becket himself rebuked the peccant brother when they had retired to their lodgings; and the night was no doubt spent in anxiety. Next morning early the king left London without seeing any of the bishops; and sent to demand of Becket the surrender of all the castles and other honours conferred upon him when chancellor.

Embarrassing as this demand might prove, it was probably not the chief source of anxiety to Becket. His confidential friend, John of Salisbury, was ordered to leave the kingdom; the bishops dispersed to their sees in no cheerful mood; and his correspondence soon acquainted him with intrigues against him at home and abroad. Arnulf, bishop of Liseux, had insidiously advised the king that, to overcome the primate, he must detach from him the bishops. They were privately assured that the king, while bent upon a public and unreserved assent to his claims, would promise to require nothing inconsistent with canonical vows. Roger of York, Gilbert of London, and Hilary of Chichester, readily withdrew the obnoxious reservation, and expressed regret that the primate had made a dissension about mere words. Then the archbishop himself was plied with arguments drawn from the king's former kindness, his present anger, and his assurances of respect for church rights. Lastly, there came letters from the pope and cardinals,—the result of Henry's influence at home,—authorizing and even exhorting him to yield the points in dispute. No wonder that Becket, —though he had other letters telling him that the liars listened less to words than to gifts,—no wonder that the strong man, thus beset by feebleness and craft, threw away, for the moment, his shield, and made submission. Hurrying to Woodstock, he withdrew in the king's presence the reservation,—“saving always our own order.” The monarch, who could be cool as well as passionate, relaxed

somewhat the coldness of his reception at this humble submission,—but required that the archbishop's submission should be as public as was his contumacy. Another council was therefore convoked—the famous Council of Clarendon.

CHAPTER VIII. .

CONSTITUTIONS OF CLARENDON.

THE place which has given its name to one of the most famous events, and to some of the most celebrated men in English history, is the site of a royal castle on the road from Salisbury to Winchester. It was once easy of access to the royal voluptuary from the Woodstock with which tradition associates his name and that of the fair Eleanor, but not quite so to the prelates and nobles who had to make their way, along wet dark roads, in the dead of winter (January, 1164), from various parts of the kingdom. Becket, coming up from Canterbury, would pass from within sight of the noble towers which Augustine had founded and Lanfranc restored,—across a country owing as much of its culture to the science of churchmen as to the industry of Saxon boors,—past the fields in which he had himself gaily helped his monks to get in the hay harvest, as one of the chroniclers tells us, over bridges that might never have been built but for the neighbouring church or monastery,—and beneath castles whose martial holders were the enemies alike of priest and people. Gilbert, too, from the London which he sought to

raise to an ecclesiastical eminence worthy of its social rank,—Roger, from the northern cradle of English kingship and episcopacy,—the bishops of Hereford and Bristol, from the one extremity of England, and of Norwich and Ely from the other, could scarcely fail to read in the physical features of the country through which they toilsomely journeyed at the summons of their imperious sovereign, testimonies to the influence of their “order” upon the improving fortunes of the realm to whose ancient laws they were counted enemies. Whatever their musings, several days had passed over the one appointed, before the council was fully assembled.

The slight and confused relations of this memorable parliament, supplied to us by the chroniclers, present a curious picture of legislation in that age of imperfect civilization as well as of imperfect freedom. Some time on the first day, the archbishop declared himself ignorant as to what were the constitutions he was required to observe; and suggested that the elders of the assembly should be called upon to state them. The evening came on before anything definite had been done. Next day the elders commenced their recitations—some of which are characterized by Becket’s secretary, Herbert de Bosham, as “invented and brought forward through hatred of the archbishop, by the malice of his enemies, to enslave the church.” It would appear that the purport of the constitutions thus delivered was,—to deprive the church courts of the power of decision in cases affecting the rights of widows and orphans,

and the patronage of livings; to forbid appeals to the pope, and excommunication of the king's tenants-in-chief without license; to remove the trial of clerics to the secular tribunals; and to prevent any one, ecclesiastic or layman, from crossing the sea without the king's permission. On these, and other regulations, infringing the liberty of English subjects as well as the privileges of the church, Becket commented as they were proposed. And so the second day wore to an end.

On the third day, the recapitulation being complete, it was resolved to reduce the whole to writing, "and signed by the archbishop and others present, in order," said the king, "to prevent any further misunderstandings from arising at any future time: let the elders of the kingdom, therefore, withdraw at once, with my clerks, and again return with these laws reduced to writing." There are various readings of the result of this amusing but simple process of legislation; and while the scribes and elders are at their task, we may peruse for ourselves the record preserved in one of Becket's biographies:—

"I. If any controversy concerning the advowson and presentation of churches arise between laics, or between clerics and laics, or between clerics only, it is to be tried and determined in the king's court.

"II. Churches belonging to the king's fee cannot be granted in perpetuity without his assent and consent.

"III. Clerics arraigned and accused of any matter whatsoever, being summoned by the king's

justice, shall come into his court, there to answer on whatever point it shall seem proper to the king's court to require an answer: provided alway, that the king's justice shall send to the court of holy church to see in what manner the matter is there to be handled. And in case a cleric is found or pleads guilty, he is no longer to be screened by the church.

“ IV. No archbishops, bishops, or parsons of the kingdom are allowed to depart the same without license of the king; and if they should have permission of the king to go abroad, they shall give security that neither in going or staying they will procure any evil or damage to the king or the kingdom.

“ V. Excommunicated persons shall not be bound to give security or take oath to remain where they are, but only security and pledge to stand to the judgment of the church, in order to their absolution.

“ VI. Laics ought not to be accused but by certain specified and legal accusers and witnesses, and that in the bishop's presence; yet so that the archdeacon may not lose his right nor any advantage which he ought to have from thence; and if the accused parties be such that none either will or dare accuse them, the sheriff, being required thereto by the bishop, shall cause twelve legally qualified men of the vicarage or town to be sworn before the bishop, that they will try out the truth according to their conscience.

“ VII. No man who holds of the king *in capite*, nor any of his chief ministers, is to be excommunicated nor the lands of any such laid under interdict,

unless the king (if he be in the land), or (if he be abroad) his justice, be first consulted, that he may see justice done upon him : and so that whatever shall pertain to the king's court may be determined there, and that which belongs to the ecclesiastical court may be remitted to the same, to be there dispatched.

“ VIII. Appeals, when they arise, ought to be made from the archdeacon to the bishop, and from the bishop to the archbishop ; and if the archbishop shall fail to do justice, recourse is to be had lastly to the king, that by his precept the controversy may be determined in the archbishop's court, with the understanding that it must not proceed further without leave of the lord king.

“ IX. If any difference arise between a cleric and a laic, or between a laic and a cleric, concerning any tenement which the cleric pretendeth is held by *frank-almoigne*, but the laic contends to be a *lay-fee*, it shall be determined by the verdict of twelve legally qualified men, according to the custom of the king's court, and in the presence of his justice, whether the tenement belongeth to *frank-almoigne* or to the *lay-fee*. And if it be found to belong to *frank-almoigne*, the plea shall be had in the ecclesiastical court ; but if to the *lay-fee*, the plea shall be in the king's court, unless both parties claim to hold of the same bishop or baron. But if each shall claim to hold of the same bishop or baron, the plea shall be in his court ; yet, with this further proviso, that he who was first seized of the thing in controversy,

shall not lose his seizin pending the trial because of the verdict above-mentioned.

“ X. Whosoever is an inhabitant of any city, castle, borough, or any demesne lands of the lord king, if he shall be cited by the archdeacon or bishop, concerning any fault about which he ought to answer them, and will not obey their citation, it shall be lawful to put him under an interdict; but he ought not to be excommunicated before the king's chief officer of that town be made acquainted with the case, so that he may cause him to give satisfaction. And if such officer shall fail therein, he shall be in the mercy of the king, and then the bishop may averce the party accused by ecclesiastical process.

“ XI. Archbishops, bishops, and all other ecclesiastical persons in the kingdom who hold of the king *in capite*, may enjoy their possessions of our lord the king as a barony, and, for that reason, are to answer to the king's justices and ministers, and to follow and perform all royal rights and customs, and, like other barons, ought to appear at trials in the king's court, till they come to pronouncing sentence of death or loss of members.

“ XII. When an archbishopric, bishopric, abbacy, or priory, in the gift of the lord king shall be vacant, it ought to remain in his hands, and he to receive the rents and issues thereof, as of his demesnes. And when he pleases to provide for that church, the lord king ought to send for the chief persons of that church, and the election ought to be made in the

king's chapel, with the assent of the king, and with the advice of such persons of his realm as he shall call thereto; and the person elect shall there, before his consecration, do homage and fealty to the king as liege lord of his life, and members, and earthly honour, saving his order.

“ XIII. If any of the great men of the kingdom shall refuse to do justice to our archbishop, or a bishop, or an archdeacon, either for him or his tenants, the king is to adjudicate. And if perchance any one shall refuse the lord king his right, the archbishop, or bishops and archdeacons are to call him to account, that they may make satisfaction to the lord king.

“ XIV. The chattels of those who are under the king's forfeiture may not be detained in any church or churchyard against the king's justice, because they are the king's own, whether they be found within the church and its precincts or without it.

“ XV. Pleas concerning debts, which are owing upon troth-plight, or without troth-plight, are to be within the cognizance of the lord king.

“ XVI. The sons of peasants ought not to be ordained without the consent of the lord on whose land they are known to be born.”

When the instrument thus prepared was presented to the archbishop, first, for his signature, he declared instantly, “ By God Almighty, no seal of mine shall ever be affixed to constitutions such as those.” This declaration, notwithstanding his private profession to the king, could hardly have taken the council by

surprise,—seeing that the archbishop had continually dissented from the rendering put upon that promise ; and that a pledge of general obedience differs widely from the ratification of a specific instrument. He in fact appears to have accused the king of breaking faith with him, by giving this shape—at once exact and comprehensive—to an understanding which was undoubtedly intended by both parties to save the king's pride, without formally relinquishing the privileges of the church. This is none the less probable from the king's withdrawing in anger ; and it is confirmed by a letter, written long after, in which Gilbert Foliot sharply rebukes the archbishop for not having maintained this ground, when all the bishops were ready to stand or fall at his side. “Who could be more unanimous than we?” writes Foliot. “We were all shut up in one chamber, and on the third day the princes and nobles of the kingdom, bursting into fury, entered the conclave, where we sat, threw back their cloaks, and holding forth their hands to us, exclaimed, ‘Listen, ye who set at nought the king's statistics, and obey not his commands. These hands, these arms, these bodies of ours, are not ours, but king Henry's ; and they are ready at his nod to avenge his wrongs, and to work his will, whatever it may be. Whatever are his commands, they will be law and justice in our eyes ; retract these counsels, then, and bend to his will, that you may avoid the danger before it is too late.’” The substantial worth of this part of the relation is confirmed by the monkish biographers,

who all agree in representing that the bishops were alternately menaced and entreated by the barons. But Foliot goes on to recall that Becket, to the astonishment, sorrow, and indignation of his brethren, was the first to propose a seeming submission. “His lordship of Canterbury himself withdrew from our fraternity, and from our determination; and after holding counsel with himself alone, he returned to us and said aloud, ‘It is God’s will that I should perjure myself; for the present I submit and incur perjury to repent of it hereafter as I best may.’” It is incredible that Becket should have announced in these words a resolution taken under such circumstances; and it is not clear that he did sign the constitutions. Roger de Pontigny describes him as departing from the council with these words,—a copy of the document having been given him:—“I accept this, *not consenting, nor approving*, but for caution, and for defence of the church, that by this document we may know what it is that we must act against.”

But whatever the degree to which Becket suffered his resolution or his integrity to be overborne, his humiliation and grief could hardly have been exceeded. Returning from Clarendon to Winchester, for the last time, he rode on before his company, dejected and alone. He overheard his cross-bearer, Edward Guin, a stout Saxon monk, deploring that so great a pillar of the church had been shaken; and his secretary Herbert ventured to address him with words of consolation. Then the brave heart

broke into a lament of self-reproaches. "I cannot help fancying," he is reported to have said, "that my sins are the cause why the Church of England is thus reduced to bondage. . . . I was taken from the court to fill this station; not from the cloister, nor from a religious house, nor from a school of the Saviour, but from the palace of Cæsar—a proud and vain man. I was a feeder of birds, and I was suddenly made a feeder of men. I was a patron of stage plays and a follower of hounds, and I became a shepherd over so many souls. . . . I am given over by God, and unworthy even to be ejected from the hallowed see in which I have been placed." And so with weeping eyes, the great man who had lately filled Christendom with the favour of his magnificence and power, journeyed to the nearest city of the kingdom which had suddenly become his prison. For the new constitutions forbade even self-expatriation to the unhappy victims of a double allegiance.

CHAPTER IX.

COUNCIL OF NORTHAMPTON.

FROM Winchester the archbishop sent a messenger to the pope, at Sens. During the forty days of his absence, Becket desisted from officiating at the altar, humbled himself in the sight of the congregation, and performed private penance, as an acknowledgment of his faults, in having weakly promised at Woodstock what he dared not perform at Clarendon. For this fault, the pontiff sent him pleasing absolution, professed much sympathy for his trials, and encouraged him to bear up with confidence. For some purpose which does not clearly appear, the archbishop, on his journey home, turned off to Woodstock; but the king would not see him, and he went on to Canterbury with the resolution of leaving the kingdom. For this resolution he has been violently reproached by historians, as showing a lawless and coward spirit. But surely a man is not morally bound by a new and arbitrary enactment, to which he has either refused his consent, or given it under coercion—least of all, when death may be the consequence of obedience. There may have been no truth in the report made to him that his life would be taken if he continued to oppose

the king's wishes—but such a report was certainly current, and was not of a nature to be scrutinized. We can see nothing dishonourable, therefore, in his rising at midnight, stealing forth with only two attendants, making for one of his manors on the coast,—according to Fitzstephen, that village of Rumeneye where he had entertained the king but twelve months before,—and embarking in an open boat for France. We sympathize with his anxious fear and disappointment when the adverse wind compels him to debark, while it is yet dawn, on the Kentish coast,—when a second time he puts out to sea, and is driven back,—and when, baffled and broken-spirited, he returns to Canterbury in the dusk. One of the two attendants, “a clerk,” had returned as soon as his master had embarked, and had endeavoured to prevent the servants from breaking up the household when they found that their lord had disappeared. This clerk sat up late, talking of the archbishop's perils, perhaps half expecting his return. At length he bade a servant shut the outer door of the court, and get to bed. The man returned in affright, with a lighted candle, saying he had seen the archbishop crouched in one of the corners of the court. So it proved. And the archbishop, calling the monks together, explained to them how God had defeated his purpose. Next morning, they would see a merciful intent in that defeat; for at daybreak there appeared at the palace royal officers, who said that they had heard of the archbishop's flight, and were come to confiscate his possessions—but who

retired in confusion at his presence. To improve the effect of this unexpected turn in his favour, Becket went again to Woodstock. The king admitted him to an interview,—but the tone of one of his speeches sufficiently explains why nothing resulted. “So, my lord,” said his pleasant majesty, “you wish to leave the kingdom: I suppose it is not large enough to hold both you and me.”

The bishop of Evreux, acting as mediator, was more successful. He went to the king at Porchester Castle, whither the court had removed from Woodstock, and drew from the king a hasty but definite declaration: “It is in vain to talk on this subject, my lord bishop; there is but one way to make peace between us, which is this—that both you and the archbishop shall do your best to procure the ratification of the pope to my constitutions.” The bishop instantly set off to Becket, and urged him, with obvious arguments, to accept this means of shifting the responsibility of the struggle upon the pontiff. Becket complied—not doubting that the pope would refuse his ratification. But already there were letters on the road from Sens, which too clearly warned the primate of desertion by the worthless courtesan of ease and wealth whom he had mistaken for the faithful spouse of Christ. About Easter, the antipope, Octavian, died. Alexander was therefore able to mount the papal throne in independence of the English or any other king. But this did but protract the negotiations already on foot. At Rome, as at Sens,—when sole sovereign of Christendom as when

but a rival bishop,—the pope was ready to sell every privilege of the Church of England, every prerogative of the church of Canterbury, and even the life of its too devoted pastor.

But before this catastrophe could be accomplished, there were two or three acts of the tragedy to be enacted. The king summoned a council at Northampton, the object of which illustrates the judicial as well as legislative character of these assemblies. It was to try the archbishop on charges of malversation as chancellor, and of disobedience to the king's summons at the suit of one John Marshal. The council was convoked for Tuesday, October 6, 1164. The place of assembly was in itself an indication of Henry's determination to crush his old friend and servant—so distant was Northampton, in those days, from Becket's own land and people. But this very circumstance the heroic priest turned into an opportunity of moral triumph. He presented himself, with his attendant monks, on the very day appointed. The king loitered so long on the road—"hawking along every river and stream he came to"—that it was night before he reached the town. The archbishop lodged in the monastery of St. Andrew's, and rose betimes to hear mass. He then repaired to the royal castle, and entered the great hall—which Fitzstephen mentions as "the first apartment." When the king came in from prayers, Becket rose, and "bowing to him with a cheerful countenance," stood ready to salute him with the kiss of peace. Henry evaded this usual courtesy; but listened to the archbishop's complaint,

that one of the barons had occupied the house allotted to himself, and gave orders that it should be resigned to the primate's party. The archbishop then referred to the first ostensible business of the council, and explained why he had not personally obtained a summons to appear in the king's court on a church festival, on the writ procured by his Majesty's retainer, John Marshel. It was in consequence of this neglect that he had been summoned, through the sheriff of Kent, to attend this council. But Marshel himself had not arrived—being detained, the king said, by his business in the court of exchequer at London ; and so the archbishop was excused from further attendance that day.

On Thursday, there was a very full attendance at the council. "All the temporal peers were assembled, and all the bishops, except the bishop of Rochester, and another whose name is not mentioned." The archbishop was then formally accused of treason, in that he had, without any valid excuse, and in violation of his oath of fealty and homage, neglected to attend on the king's summons. His defence was overruled, and the king demanded immediate judgment against him. But it was necessary that some one should pronounce the sentence of confiscation of all goods and moveables, subject to the king's mercy ; and this the barons and bishops alike evaded—the latter pleading that they could not pass sentence on their lord, and the former that they could not pass sentence on an ecclesiastic. The king angrily interposed, and commanded Henry of Winchester to

pronounce the sentence. The archbishop bowed in silence, and his suffragans—all except Gilbert Foliot—volunteered their pledge for his submission. To those near him, the archbishop said, “Though I hold my tongue, posterity will speak for me, and exclaim against this iniquitous condemnation.” His appeal has not been in vain—for no one can deny the harshness of thus punishing a merely technical and probably frequent omission; seeing that Becket had made an appearance to the summons by four knights, bearing letters, and therefore no indignity could have been intended. But still more has posterity exclaimed against the proceedings that followed, as absolutely and necessarily unjust. He was next charged with not having accounted for three hundred pounds, received by him as warden of the castles of Eye and Berkhamstead. He replied, that he was under no obligation to answer a charge not included in the summons on which he attended the council, but that he had spent much more than the money in question upon repairs of the king’s castles and palaces. The king denied that he had authorized this expenditure, and demanded judgment. But the archbishop prevented another act of oppression under the form of justice, by saying that no question of money should ever lie between him and his sovereign. He obtained security, from the Earl of Gloucester and others in the council—one of them the William of Eynesford whom he had excommunicated—for the payment of the money on the king’s demand. And the council adjourned till the morning.

Before the re-opening of the court, the archbishop was informed that a claim would be made upon him for five hundred marks, lent him during the war in France, and for another five hundred advanced by a Jew on the king's surety. In addition to the claim for these sums—which he admitted to have received, but as gifts—he was called upon to account for the proceeds of the archbishopric while vacant, and of the bishoprics and abbacies in his charge while chancellor. He of course denied his liability to meet these calls without notice; but promised to do so at another time and place. But even the request for a short delay to confer with his clerks and friends was refused, and instant judgment demanded. The council endeavoured to save him from condemnation by suggesting that he should find surety for the payment. This he declined to do, as unworthy of the king to ask and of himself to obtain, seeing that his estates were of notoriously greater value than the sums demanded. But he was reminded that all his personal property had been already confiscated,—and some one added, he must therefore find bail, or remain a prisoner. There were five men in the council generous enough to shame both their king and their peers, by offering to become bound for the archbishop in a hundred marks each. But the barons, as a whole, ceased from that moment to pay him the usual respect, looking upon him as doomed to destruction. There were but few visitors at his lodgings that evening.

But early on Saturday morning—the fourth day of the council—all the spiritual peers assembled there

to consult with him on what should be done. Henry of Winchester, who already figures in this history for wisdom, now proved also his munificence, by offering to pay the king two thousand marks if he would abandon the prosecution. Henry was too bent upon the gratification of his revenge to listen either to his avarice, or to the almost filial duty he owed to the aged prelate. The offer was refused—and the council proceeded to try the charge respecting vacant bishoprics and abbacies. The archbishop asked for an opportunity of separate consultation with his suffragans; and this was afforded him—but not till the king had ordered the gates of the castle to be locked. Notwithstanding that the archbishop was thus already a prisoner, Henry of Winchester counselled him to resist—declaring that no one could charge him with a single dishonourable act; and reminding his brethren that not only had the chancellor been delivered over freely to the church, but that when a monk was taken from one abbey to preside over another, a similar act of indemnity was always given. But Hilary of Chichester did not even dissemble his base wishes. “Would to God,” he said to the primate, “you were not the archbishop, but plain Thomas Becket. You must know the king better than we, because you were so intimate with him formerly, but it appears to us there is no doubt of his meaning. Who can be expected to become surety for you to an uncertain, and perhaps a most ruinous amount? The king is reported to have said that either he or you must resign; it is better, therefore, to throw yourself en-

tirely on his mercy." To this craven counsel the crafty Foliot added—"Perhaps the king would recompense your humility by giving you back again your see." Becket replied with contemptuous curtness: "It is enough: your opinion is evident, and so are your motives." Robert of Lincoln, who had a reputation for outspoken common sense,—which in priests is practical atheism,—said bluntly, "It seems to me that this man's life is in danger, and that he will lose it or his bishopric: what good his bishopric will do him if he loses his life, I do not clearly see." Bartholomew of Exeter probably remembered to have read in the Gospel, at mass, "*Quid enim prodest cuipiam si totum mundum lucratus fuerit, animâ vero suâ mulctatur? aut quam dabit quispiam compensationem animæ suæ?*"* But he may also have remembered and applied another text: "*Vos nihil scitis nec cogitatis conducere nobis ut unus homo moriatur pro populo, et tota gens non pereat;*"† for he was not ashamed to say, almost in the words of Caiaphas, "It is better for an individual to be in jeopardy than for the whole church to suffer." Roger of Worcester, a brother of the king's, contrived to combine candour with silence, thus—"If I say that we have received the care of souls to resign it at the king's bidding, I shall speak against my conscience, and be guilty of my own damnation; if, on the other hand, I advise to resist the king, there are plenty of his men who will hear me, and will carry word to the king, and I shall be treated like a public enemy: I have made up my

* St. Matthew xvi. 25.

† St. John xi. 49, 50.

mind, therefore, to say neither the one nor the other.” Only the venerable Henry of Winchester had the courage to characterize these speeches as shameful and pernicious. “If our archbishop,” said he—resuming the whole argument in a sentence—“if the primate of all England shall set us the example of resigning the cure of souls committed to his charge at the beck and nod of a temporal sovereign, what will become of the whole church? There will be no more regard paid to rights and privileges; but anarchy will ensue, and the priest will be no better than the people.” Thus unable to arrive at an agreement, the archbishop sent for two of his friends among the nobility who were with the king. To them he stated the wish of his brethren for an adjournment, promising when the council re-opened to be ready with an answer. The bishops of London and Rochester were appointed to carry this message to the king. The former, however, made it appear that the archbishop wanted only a little delay in order to prepare for submission. With this understanding, the king granted an adjournment. But when the two earls returned and reported the condition annexed, Becket indignantly disclaimed it. The council broke up in confusion,—and even the knights who had yesterday, as heretofore, dined with the archbishop, were now afraid to be seen in his company. The archbishop therefore sent out his servants to call in the monks and the poor of the city, and so filled his table, as he said, with a new order of customers, that would not so readily desert.

The next day being Sunday, the archbishop and his remaining adherents did not leave their lodgings; and on the Monday, he was too ill to leave his bed. The king thought, or affected to think, his illness a deception,—but the earls of Leicester and Cornwall went to visit him. They found him really unable to move,—the complaint (one to which he was liable) attacking his loins and legs; but he assured them he would attend the council next day, even if carried thither in a litter. In the morning he was better, and able to rise early to a third mass. He ordered the introit from the office for St. Stephen, beginning with the words, “Princes sat together against me.” The courtiers present took care to inform the king of this,—and others remembered that this very day was the centenary of William’s invasion of England. Becket himself seems to have shared the presentiment of signal danger, for he secretly carried with him a piece of consecrated bread. The bishops met him again at his lodgings, and he addressed to them a speech which is thus reported:—“My brethren, our enemies, as you perceive, are pressing upon us, and the whole world is against us; but my chief sorrow is, that you, who are the sons of my mother, do not take my part. Though I were to say nothing, yet all future ages will declare that you deserted me in the battle, me, your father and archbishop, sinner though I am, and for two whole days you sat as judges over me, and were a mote in my eye, and a goad in my sides,—you, who ought to have taken part with me against my enemies. And, I doubt not, from the

words which have dropped from you, that you would sit as judges over me in criminal causes, as you have already done in civil matters, before this secular tribunal. But I now enjoin you all, in virtue of your obedience, and in peril of your orders, not to be present in any cause which may be moved against my person; and to prevent you from doing so, I appeal to that refuge of the distressed, the holy Roman see. Moreover, if, as I have heard it intimated, and, indeed, as is already reported publicly, the secular authority should lay violent hands upon me, I command you, by virtue of your obedience, to put forth the censures of the church in behalf of your father and your archbishop. For be assured of one thing, though enemies shall press hard upon me, and the world itself be against me, though this frail body yield to their persecution, because all flesh is weak, yet shall my spirit never yield, nor will I ever, by God's mercy, turn my back in flight, nor basely desert the flock committed to my care."

Gilbert Foliot alone had the craven courage to answer this moving appeal and injunction, while Joceline of Salisbury joined with Henry of Winchester, in comforting and encouraging the man who seemed, as he mounted his horse to go to the council, to be riding to his own destruction. He had at first thought of walking from his house to the castle, barefooted, carrying his cross, and of kneeling at the king's feet in supplication for the liberties of the church. But this singular spectacle was prevented by the remonstrances of his friends. Even as he rode along, he

regretted to his crossbearer that he had been dissuaded from his first intention. It can hardly be said, therefore, that the scene which did ensue, and which is familiar to all readers of English history, as the arrogant priest flouting with mitre and cross the crown and sceptre,—it can hardly be said that the scene thus interpreted was arranged in policy, or instigated by passion. He had laid aside his mitre and pall after mass, and it does not appear that he had resumed them. On reaching the castle, he took the archiepiscopal cross into his own hands. In the hall were some of the bishops, who would—either out of respect, or regarding it as a sign of obstinacy—have taken it from him. He declined, calling it his banner and his sword. The bishops therefore left him, and went into an upper chamber, whither the king had retired on Becket's arrival. Among these was Roger of York, preceded by his crossbearer, though forbidden to carry that ensign of supremacy in the province of Canterbury. They informed the king of the commands which their archbishop had laid upon them, and of his appeal to the pope. At this he became furious, and sent out some of the barons to demand his instant, unqualified submission. They appear to have done their office mildly, for [he replied to them with a temperate statement of his position, though reiterating his appeal to the pope. Thus silenced in argument, some of them began to talk, so that he could overhear, of the cruel punishments which had been inflicted on Stigand and other rebellious prelates. But when the king demanded sentence, he found that

Becket's cross had really struck a heavy blow at his sword. The bishops pleaded that they dare not disobey their primate's prohibition. Roger of York called to his clerks to be off, but one of them, Master Robert Grandis, refused to leave his lordship of Canterbury, who could lose his life in no better cause. Bartholomew of Exeter implored the archbishop on his knees to save them from the decree which had gone forth against all who adhered to him as enemies of the state. The bishops of Salisbury and Norwich added their entreaties—as well they might, having been threatened with an act of barbarity which made Norwich say, he would gladly have been a paralytic like his brother of Ely. These Becket advised to flee. But meanwhile, some others of the bishops had been making a compromise with the king. They offered to appeal to the pope against their archbishop on the ground that he had sworn to obey, though he refused to sign, those statutes of Clarendon which he now contravened by his appeal to the pope. One would have thought that their appeal would have been equally unlawful with his, but that does not seem to have been suggested. When they presented themselves to Becket, and threw off his allegiance, and summoned him before the pope, he calmly reminded them that not only had his promise been conditional, but that the constitutions were not binding on them till ratified by the pope, who had in fact disallowed the most objectionable. The bishops again withdrew to the council. Presently the barons came out in a body—and the earls of Leicester and Cornwall, who

appear to have been faithful mediators throughout, approached the archbishop to inform him of the judgment of the court as to the revenue of vacant sees formerly in his care. Becket interrupted them, demanding whether Prince Henry had not expressly freed him from all civil obligations, and whether he was bound to hear judgment when he had not received notice of trial. The earls intimated that the bishop of London had prepared them for a very different reception; and after a little private deliberation, requested the archbishop to wait till they had had another interview with the king. "Am I then a prisoner?" he asked. "By St. Lazarus, no," answered Leicester. "Then hear but one word more, my son," said the archbishop: "I decline to receive judgment from the king or you. The pope alone, under God, is my judge. I call the bishops who have obeyed the king rather than God to answer before his tribunal. And so, protected by the holy Catholic church, and the power of the apostolic see, I leave this court!" As he rose and turned to depart, the barons loitering about exclaimed aloud that he was a traitor and a perjurer. He stumbled against one of the logs of firewood in the court, and none of these chivalrous nobles ran to his aid. One of them, Randolph de Broc, who had an old grudge against him, threw at him pieces of straw picked from the floor of the hall. Another, the king's illegitimate brother, called out that he was sneaking away like a coward. At this last insult the spirit of the once distinguished soldier flamed out, and he

said, "Had I a sword, it should answer that foul speech." His horses were in the yard, but the gate was locked. The clerks who became his biographers mention it as something miraculous that one Peter de Morton espied the keys hanging in a corner. As they rode out, so great was the multitude that their horses could scarcely move. At the instigation of one of the bishops, the king sent out a herald to make proclamation that no one should molest the archbishop. But it is doubtful whether even the court followers would have dared to insult him outside the castle gate. The people had taken him under their protection. "What a glorious procession escorts me home," he said to one of his clerks. Again that night the poor and sick and halt and blind were bidden freely to his table at the monastery. His own knights received permission to depart, for fear of the king's anger, and now only his clerks remained. The reader at supper happened to come across the text, "If they persecute you in one city flee ye to another;" at which the archbishop and his secretary exchanged significant looks. He had probably again resolved on attempting escape. But they were interrupted by the bishops of London and Chichester, who said they were authorized to state that the king would be satisfied if the archbishop would assign to him for a time his manors of Otford and Munheaton. The nature of the proposal was as suspicious as the character of the messengers. Becket replied, "The manor of Hercham, once belonging to my archbishopric, is now in the king's hands. There is no hope of recovering it, yet would

I rather lose my head than resign even that manor.” The answer would naturally have further excited the king if he had really intended a reconciliation. But when, presently afterwards, Becket sent three other bishops to ask for a safe conduct to his own diocese, they found the king in an ominously good humour, and he told them they should have an answer next day. Two noblemen—probably Leicester and Cornwall—confidentially informed the archbishop, about the same time, that he was really in danger. When, therefore, he told the monks to make up his bed behind the high altar of their chapel, it was an understood method of combining the repose of sleep with the security of a sanctuary. He retired at an early hour, and one of his own servants was posted hard by. But meanwhile, Herbert de Bosham was ordered to set off immediately for Canterbury, get all the money he could from the stewards who were just collecting the rents, with a book which the archbishop highly valued, and await him at St. Omers. At the same time, Brother Scailman, and two trusty knights, were instructed to procure four good horses, not of the archbishop’s stud; and bring them round to the postern door of the convent at dark. This was done promptly. The archbishop left his hiding-place as the monks thought he was falling asleep,—joined his three friends at the door,—got to the north gate of the town before the guard had been posted for the night,—and rode off through a storm that drenched them with rain, but added to the obscurity of their flight.

CHAPTER X.

FLIGHT AND EXILE.

THE horsemen rode hard, and their steeds were good. Though the rain so weighted their garments that the disguised archbishop had four times to cut off portions of his monkish cloak,—and the roads were doubtless bad—and they rested two hours midway,—they arrived at Lincoln—fifty miles from Northampton—by daybreak. They went to the house of an acquaintance named Jacob, where they lay hidden till a boat could be procured to convey them down the river to a hermitage forty miles distant. It was not likely that the scattered inhabitants of the fens would recognise in humble “Brother Dearman” the stately Thomas Becket; but, lest emissaries from the court should be scouring the roads, the four companions remained here three days. Then they proceeded on foot to Haverston, another retreat of the monks of Semphingham. Thence they travelled, slowly and by night, down to the south coast, until they reached Estrey, a village eight miles from Canterbury, whose parish priest had a private communication between his house and the church. There they rested and received the Eucharist, the

archbishop himself (known only to the priests) bestowing his blessing on the congregation. It was the twentieth day after their flight from Northampton,—and therefore in the first week of November,—when they crossed, in a small open boat, the tempestuous sea between the coasts of Kent and Flanders. Running the boat ashore in a lonely place near Gravelines, they struck into the country. Meeting a party out hawking, Becket's old habits of falconry nearly betrayed him; and he was saved from discovery only by the ready wit of one of his attendants. The Earl of Boulogne was on the look out for, and would gladly have seized him. He therefore changed his name to "Brother Christian," and his habit to that of a Cistercian monk. An innkeeper, aided by the penetration of his wife, suspected the rank of their guest from his noble presence and bearing; but instead of revealing him, the good folks craved his benediction, and thanked the saints for so honoured a guest. From Gravelines, where this incident took place, it was thirty-six miles to the abbey of Clermarais, and they traversed the distance chiefly on foot. Even when approaching St. Omers, where they were sure of finding good friends, if not their steward Herbert, they deemed it prudent to hide for some time in a hermitage among the marshes, belonging to the abbey of St. Bertin. But here they were joined by Herbert, with considerable treasures; and warmly welcomed by the abbot. It was on a Friday they reached the monastery; and the fugitives had fared so badly of late, that one of

them suggested a dispensation. But the archbishop, who had once given five pounds for a dish of eels, professed his willingness to trust in God's pleasure that the fish would be in plenty; to reward which pious confidence, says an historian whose faith in the miraculous does not disdain the circumstantial, a large fish, of a sort specified, leaped from the river which led up to the convent into the archbishop's bosom.—At St. Bertin the archbishop had an interview with his old co-justiciary, Richard de Lucy, who had been on a mission to king Louis,—and tried to induce Becket to return with him; failing which he renounced the homage he had formerly professed. Another Englishman, Milo, bishop of a Norman see, entered warmly into the archbishop's confidence; and since the court of Flanders hesitated to give a safe conduct to the court of France, assisted him, with the abbot, to make their way privately to Soissons, where the king then held his court.

Thither had preceded them another company of Englishmen. Immediately that Becket's departure had been ascertained, it was resolved at Northampton to send the bishops of London, Chichester, Exeter, and Worcester, with the Earl of Arundel and other nobles, on an embassy to the pope. They crossed the straits on the same day as Becket,—passed within sight of his party at the hermitage in the marshes,—and were followed by Herbert de Bosham to Compiègne. They called there on the French king, and produced letters in which Becket was

described as the “late archbishop of Canterbury;” which shocked the French king’s notion of the stability of the priesthood. An ill-timed allusion to Becket’s conduct at Toulouse equally offended his chivalry. Instead of undertaking to give him no protection, he declared that he should be welcomed by the whole court. The embassy went on to Sens, —and when Herbert, with another of the archbishop’s household, revealed themselves, they were treated with honour and even familiarity. Thus encouraged, they also continued their journey to the papal court; where the cardinals received them coldly, but the pope with much kindness. They were present at the audience of the king’s ambassadors, and have left an account of it which makes the bishops cut a ridiculous figure—Gilbert Foliot drawing down a rebuke from the pope by his vehemence against the archbishop, and Hilary setting the cardinals laughing by his floundering rhetoric. The Earl of Arundel made a temperate appeal to the pope to aid in restoring peace between the archbishop and the king. Herbert de Bosham twice rose to defend his master, but was prevented by the pope saying, “Peace, my friend, there is no charge against your bishop.” Even the offer to make Peter’s pence a charge upon the holders of dwellings, as well as upon the soil, failed to bribe the pontiff. And though he promised to appoint a legate *a latere* to try the questions at issue in England, he would not concede the right of appeal to himself as desired by the bishop of London. The embassy was therefore a

failure, and the envoys moodily set out for home. As they went, they narrowly escaped being set upon by a party of knights friendly to the archbishop; and he himself passed them on the opposite side of the river with a retinue far superior to their own. The king of France met him at Soissons with a brilliant cavalcade, expressed much sympathy at the narrative of his hardships, and furnished him at his departure for Sens with ample funds.

Still more satisfactory to the archbishop was his reception at Rome. Though only a few of the cardinals went out to meet him, the pope placed him at his right hand in the conclave, and bade him sit while speaking. His speech was the more effective through its modesty and moderation. It was a simple narrative, which he concluded by unrolling and perusing the "Constitutions." Even the least friendly of the cardinals could not deny that this instrument struck a deadly blow at the privileges of the church. They all concurred with the pope in promising to support the archbishop against the king. The pope publicly rebuked him for the sin of assenting for a moment to such unlawful demands; but went on to absolve him in consideration of the atonement he had made. Becket replied with a profession, no doubt sincere enough, of repentance for the prior and more grievous sin of suffering himself to be thrust into Christ's fold not through the strait gate of canonical election, but by the favour of the king; and he ended by drawing from his finger the archiepiscopal ring, which he handed to the pope as

a token of his resignation of the primacy of England. The effect of this upon the conclave indicates that the act was as spontaneous as it was impressive. Some of the cardinals saw in it a means of reconciling their wishes with their professions, and spoke in private conference of bestowing on Becket the next important office that should fall vacant; but the more faithful or sagacious saw that the independence of the church in England must stand or fall with the archbishop of Canterbury; and they urged that Becket should be instantly reinstated. The pope accordingly bade him receive a new investiture free from the defects of the former; but further to purge away the old courtly leaven of his life, or perhaps, to afford time for temporizing with his powerful master, consigned him to the monks of Pontigny, there to live for a while on meagre fare, and wear a humble garb. Thither he soon after departed. The abbot appointed to attend upon him the monk Roger, who became one of his biographers. The pope sent him a cape and hood on which he had bestowed his blessing, but which was a ludicrous misfit. And there he lived for nearly two years, from Christmas 1164, secure in person, but not tranquil in mind, and tortured for some time by toothache and fistula, the result of his unwonted poverty of diet.

But sharp as were these contrasts in Becket's own condition, far more severe were the misfortunes entailed upon others by his resistance to the king. Exasperated by the failure of his embassy, Henry gave orders on the 26th of December by circular letters

to the clergy and sheriffs, confiscating all the archbishop's property, seizing the revenues of his see, and banishing all his relations, friends, and servants. The execution of these tyrannical orders he confided to Randolph de Broc, who carried them out with ferocious cruelty. Every one connected with the archbishop by friendship, however remote—all his clerks and followers, mothers and their infants, old men and children—were summoned from their homes to the palace at Lambeth, ordered to take themselves across the sea, and made to swear that they would hasten to present themselves to the archbishop. Four hundred persons in all, besides noblemen and ecclesiastics who were heavily fined and imprisoned, were thus driven into exile—exile aggravated to the utmost degree by helplessness and exposure. In the dead of winter, in open boats, with little food or clothing, they were hurried over the sea, and cast upon a strange and almost unpeopled shore. Many of them perished—women with babes at their breasts, and women with their babes in their womb—perished of the cold and hunger which reduced strong men to the appearance of ghosts. The woods could afford them neither food nor shelter, and the small towns could afford them little more; but those who survived received the generous aid of the Flemish and French nobility, especially of the empress Matilda and king Louis. Few of them, it is probable, reached Pontigny in the condition stipulated by their persecutors, in order to distress by sympathy their lord and leader.

It would be easy to fill many pages with extracts from the correspondence of the archbishop during the two years of his retirement; for voluminous letters were exchanged both with his friends and opponents. To the king he wrote four times, for the most part in a dutiful and conciliatory strain; but finding this of none effect, concluded with a solemn appeal for justice, and warning of Divine retribution. This might have failed equally with the former, had he not received at the same time an intimation from the pope that the thunders of the church would no longer be restrained. Becket had received permission to excommunicate the whole court and clergy of England. A few days before Easter he went on a pilgrimage to Soissons, and performed there three vigils and other exercises. He went thence to the church at Vezealy, where the festival was this year, 1166, to be celebrated with unusual splendour. He preached from the pulpit a very exciting sermon, explained to the people the causes of his exile, and concluded by pronouncing anathema John of Oxford, and other intruders upon church offices in England. King Henry himself, he said, he spared only from having just heard of his serious illness. The people would receive it with an intensity of feeling which we cannot realize from this now obscure intimation. They understood but too well the awful risk supposed to attend death under sentence of excommunication. A poet* of our own time has painted with no

* Wordsworth.

excess of power the condition of a country under interdict:—

“Bells are dumb,
Ditches are graves, funereal rites denied,
And in the churchyard he must take his bride who dares be wedded.
Fancies thickly come
Into the pensive heart ill fortified,
And comfortless despairs the soul benumb.”

The extinguished torches did but faintly symbolize the fate which terrible superstition attached to the idea of a soul's departure from life without the priestly passport to eternity. Nor was it upon the vulgar mind alone that this blighting awe descended. Kings and barons, who had no fear to do wrong, who could even talk above their breath of taking an archbishop's life, were terrified at the thought of dying under his bann. What is still more strange, even the bishops whose practical unbelief in their own functions we have seen so curiously confessed in their private conferences, dared not confront the bolt which could take effect only upon believing hearts. Gilbert Hilary and his fellows trembled like women at the confessional, when they received from the archbishop against whom they had appealed to the pope, an epistle declaring excommunicate, and commanding them to hold as excommunicate, John of Oxford, Richard of Ilchester, Richard de Lucy, Josseline de Baliol, Randolf de Broc, Hugh de St. Clair, Thomas Fitz-Bernard, and all who shall hereafter lay hands upon the possessions of our church. Gilbert wrote much in his own name—many weary scrolls of flatulent rhetoric and irrelevant

textual argument; and he was probably the author of the remonstrance addressed in the name of the suffragan bishops and their clergy to their venerable father and bishop Lord Thomas. That epistle concluded with notice of a second appeal to the pope. The archbishop replied with an appeal to their own sense of justice and of shame, challenging them to say if ever he had wronged them, reminding them that they assented unanimously to his elevation, vindicating his acts of excommunication, and bitterly upbraiding them for not employing in his defence the spiritual weapons with which God had armed them for the protection of his church. John of Salisbury takes up his milder pen, and from him we learn that in an assembly of his nobles at Chinon, the king asserted with tears in his eyes that the archbishop would take from him both body and soul, and called them a set of traitors, forasmuch as they had not zeal or courage to deliver him from the molestations of this one man. This speech, which sounds very much like an anticipation of his fatal taunt some years later, was rebuked by the bishop of Rouen. But the bishop of Lisieux sympathetically suggested that the king might yet be in time to appeal against the threatened interdict. The king assenting, they made haste to lodge notice of the appeal with the archbishop, but he evaded its delivery by leaving Pontigny, and the king then despatched Walter de Lisle to close the ports and passes of his kingdom against messengers carrying the writ of excommunication. On the other hand,

the pope appointed the archbishop his legate for England—an additional authority as well as honour. The king retorted, terrifying the monks of Pontigny into virtually withdrawing their protection from the archbishop. They laid before him the information which awakened their fears,—and he instantly took leave of them in language which moved them to weeping and prayers. The French king, however, gave him the choice of his monasteries for a residence, and he chose that of St. Columbe, just without the walls of Sens.

It would be of doubtful interest to the reader, and would certainly swell this volume to an excessive bulk, if we were to trace minutely the progress of the intrigues which stretched over the next four years, and ended in the hollow reconciliation leading to Becket's ill-advised return. We will touch therefore only on the point that continues the narrative to its tragic close.

At the close of this year, 1166, the cardinals Otho and William were appointed as mediators between the parties. Both were notoriously favourable to the king, and during their communion the archbishop's powers of excommunication were suspended. It was nearly a year before the exiles at St. Columbe heard anything definite as to the result. In November 1167 they were summoned to meet the legate, at a place between Gisors and Trie, on the frontier of Normandy and France. Becket repaired thither; the legates suggested that he should appease the king by some profession of reverence,—but declined

to advise him more specifically ; asked him whether he could not promise to observe the constitutions,—and on his sternly reminding them of what passed at Sens, more than hinted what he might seem to promise. Becket may have foresworn himself once, but he could not systematically dissemble,—and he answered bluntly, “ No, silence is consent.” The upshot was, that, failing to cozen the archbishop, they equally failed to satisfy the king and the bishops. But the pope was becoming deeply interested in effecting a reconciliation. War had broken out between France and England, to the great disadvantage of the former,—Henry had given his daughter Matilda in marriage to the emperor of Germany,—and if irritated too far, might make common cause with the latter in support of a rival pope. Though equally unable, in 1168 as in 1167, to effect the reconciliation, he nevertheless contrived to prevent extremities,—restraining Becket from launching the long-threatened interdict, and suspending the excommunication ; and at length appointing fresh legates. By the exertion of these envoys, another conference was arranged, and came off on the plain of Montmoreil, in January, 1169. The first business of the conference was purely political,—the conclusion of peace between the rival kings, and of a marriage union between their children, Richard and Blanche. This being settled, Becket’s chances of procuring a favourable result to the ecclesiastical negotiations were obviously diminished. He once more took counsel of his own indomitable

spirit,—fed, perhaps, by the adulation of his clerks, who seem to have determined that he should not lack the crowning honour of martyrdom. He was willing to promise everything required, with the qualification, “saving God’s honour.” His speech was conciliatory, and almost beseeching; but when he came to these words, the king burst into one of his old fits of rage, and did not forbear to revile the archbishop as an arrogant apostate, appealing to the French king to note his ingratitude and vanity. “Take notice, if you please, my lord,” continued Henry, “whatever his lordship of Canterbury disapproves, he will say is contrary to God’s honour, and so he will on all occasions get the advantage of me; but that I may not be thought to despise God’s honour, I will make this proposition to him. There have been many kings of England before me, some of greater and some of less power than I. There have also been good and holy archbishops of Canterbury before him. Now, let him behave towards me as the most holy of his predecessors behaved towards the best of mine, and I am satisfied.” At this very definite concession the courtiers exclaimed, “The king humbles himself enough;” and the French king said to the archbishop, “My lord, do you wish to be more than a saint?” But he replied with equanimity, “It is true that there have been archbishops before me holier and greater than I, every one of whom extirpated some abuses in the church; but if they had corrected all, I should not now be exposed to this

hot and fiery trial." In vain the nobles and bishops, both of England and France, with the envoys of the pope, urged him to suppress the saving clause. The conference broke up farther than ever from a decision; and Becket retired uncertain whether he any longer possessed even a secure retreat. For one of the French counts had said, as he set himself in opposition to the will of both kingdoms, he was unworthy of the protection of either: "he is rejected by England—let him find no countenance in France." The kings rode off without so much as saluting the archbishop,—Henry abusing him, and declaring he was now revenged on the traitor. Even the archbishop's own attendants began now to reproach him; and to one of them he answered, "Nay, brother; take care that the church is not destroyed by you; for, by God's grace, she shall never be destroyed by me." They would have been further dispirited by the French king omitting that night his customary visit while they lodged in the same castle; but the archbishop comforted them with skilful words, and the peasants cheered them heartily as they rode next day to Chartres on their way home.

Not long after they were dolefully discussing at St. Columbe the chances of being again turned on the world,—and the archbishop was saying that rather than ask help of "those Roman robbers who do nothing but plunder the needy without compensation," he would go and live, with one attendant, among the peasants of Burgundy,—when a messenger

from the French king was announced. To their agreeable surprise he came to invite the archbishop to an interview with the king. Louis and Henry had quarrelled. The latter had broken his treaty, and added rapine to bad faith. The former knew the value of a spiritual ally against so powerful a soldier. When Becket entered his apartment, Louis knelt before him, craved absolution for his recent boldness, and asked his counsel. Their plan of operation was, that the mediators appointed by the pope should formally report their failure, and lay the blame on Henry. This done, the legates delivered to the king of England pontifical letters threatening his obstinacy with Divine vengeance. We can imagine with what a vigorous and almost rejoicing hand the persecuted but fearless prelate would grasp the thunders it was now permitted him to hurl. They were pointed, first, at the bishop of London, who had been long ago all but excommunicate for disobedience to his metropolitan. The bolt had already struck one Geoffrey Riddell, an archdeacon of Canterbury, and a clerk of the king's chapel. As he was about to commune one day at court, the bishop of Worcester withdrew, as from one under anathema. This so greatly enraged the king that he ordered him to leave the kingdom; but yielding to the warnings and entreaties of the courtiers, recalled him. The bishop did not return till he had received these messages, and the excommunicated archdeacon dare no more show himself. The bishop of Hereford dying about this time

(1167-8), from grief at his inability to obey both the primate and the king, no successor was appointed, and it remained vacant in the beginning of 1169. In February or March of that year the bishops of London and Salisbury received a final summons to appear before their metropolitan. They gave notice of appeal to the pope ; but this did not save them. On Palm Sunday, in the church of Clairvaux, the archbishop pronounced sentence of excommunication upon them, with the nobles before mentioned, and the clerks Robert de Broc and Letard de Norfleux. Others were threatened, if they did not submit before Ascension-day. Report of this could not be so easily excluded as the written instrument. Gilbert summoned a meeting of his clergy and the neighbouring dignitaries at St. Paul's, in which debate, says Fitzstephen, "the bishop's cause found much benefit from his having no opponents." But his friends were divided in opinion—some advising him to act as if under the sentence, and others to avoid its being executed. The more pleasant advice was soon found the more difficult to follow. Strictly as the ports and city gates were watched, a young layman, named Berenger, contrived to bring over the dreaded instrument. On Ascension-day, the priest officiating at St. Paul's was surprised, at the time of chaunting the Offerenda, by a stranger kneeling before him with what appeared to be his oblation. But no sooner had he taken it than the stranger, who was no other than Berenger, charged him, by God and the pope, to celebrate no more

masses till he had delivered to the bishop and dean the letters put into his hand. The young man disappeared with prudent alacrity; and the strictest search failed to discover him. Vitalis, the priest, a timid man, dared not but deliver the letters,—and after that there could be no denying that the bishop was lawfully excommunicate, and his clergy forbidden to commune with him and the others named. It was in vain that Gilbert tried to associate the other bishops with him in his appeal. Durham and Exeter declined to risk the consequence of its rejection. Winchester—the venerable and noble-hearted Henry, who had further incensed the anger of his royal nephew by assisting the exiles with money—wrote, as from his dying bed, “I, who am sinking under disease and old age, and have received a summons from the Almighty, am incapacitated from preferring an appeal to an earthly tribunal.” Worcester, who informs of these particulars the anxious chapter at Canterbury, had already presented himself before the archbishop, by permission of the king. Gilbert turned then to Henry,—who wrote to him from Normandy with strongest expressions of friendship, and promises to forward him on his way to Rome. Meanwhile the pope appointed two more legates—Vivian and Gratian; whose first act was to arrange a conference between the two kings at St. Denys, to which they invited the archbishop also. Becket reluctantly complied. Louis himself had not been informed of the intended interview, as he would probably have declined it. Henry

was to make a pretended pilgrimage to the chapel of St. Denys, the patron saint and monk of France, at the foot of the well-known Montmartre, near Paris. The kings met, as desired, on the 18th of November; and were presently joined by the archbishop. Louis, at the exhortation of the legate Vivian, acted as mediator,—his bishops and nobles added their good offices. After much debate, and several private conferences, everything was adjusted. Henry consented—not expressly, but virtually—to withdraw the constitutions; asking nothing of the archbishop but his return to England, and obedience in civil matters. Becket had then no occasion for any reservation in his promise. “All agreed that specification would do harm;” in fact, both parties were disposed to delude themselves into believing that an impossible reconciliation had been accomplished. They even forbore to stipulate on pecuniary matters—Becket accepting the king’s promise that restitution of his property and five years’ revenue should be made, when duly assessed. But their mutual distrust was still stronger than their self-deception. When the archbishop, as previously advised by the pope, asked for and offered the kiss of peace, as a pledge of good faith, the king refused it; saying he had sworn never more to kiss the archbishop, and for his oath’s sake only he would not. The mediators, equally with the archbishop, were alarmed at this reply. It was too suspicious to be disregarded. Becket declared it decisive, and the conference was thus broken off at nightfall.

The kings were thirty-six miles from their quarters, and Henry rode off cursing the long journey, the fruitless conference, and the many provocations he had received from his old favourite. The archbishop, on his part, as he was leaving the scene of conference for his quarters with the Templars, was thus ominously addressed by one of his people: "My lord, this place is called the chapel of the martyrdom; and it is my belief that nothing but your martyrdom will ever ensure peace to the church." To which he answered, "Be it so: God grant that she may be redeemed, even if my life is sacrificed." But perhaps the martyr's crown would have had an additional thorn if this had been his last parting from the once beloved friend and sovereign.

There was yet one other stage to the journey's end; and it opened hopefully, almost triumphantly, for the exile. It was impossible that Henry could hold out against weapons that had already disabled or estranged all his bishops, left him with scarce a chaplain to give the kiss of peace at mass, and threatened to dissolve the tie of allegiance. The greatness of his danger was confessed by Henry when he came to the resolution—at Nantes, about the beginning of 1169—to transfer the crown to his eldest son Henry. But it was difficult to effect this—the primate claiming the right of coronation; and being sure to exert himself to prevent its exercise by any other prelate. If only the court of Rome could stand firmly to its engagement, the exile would return home in triumph. If only!—at this very crisis, they were

furtively aiding the enemy. Becket discovered that the pope had authorized two of the Norman bishops to absolve their brethren of London and Salisbury, at the request of the king. Thereupon he wrote to the Cardinal Albert, a letter breathing the spirit of a Luther rather than of a favoured saint, within two years of his apotheosis:—

“I wish, my dear friend, your ears were hard by the mouths of some of our people, that you might hear what is chaunted in the streets of Ascalon to the discredit of the Roman church. Our last messenger seemed to have brought us some consolation in the pope’s letters, which we have received, but their authority has been altogether nullified by other letters, commanding that Satan should be set free to the destruction of the church. Thus, by the apostolic mandate, the bishops of London and Salisbury, one of whom is known to have been the fomentor of the schism, and the contriver of all this wickedness from the beginning, and to have inveigled the bishop of Salisbury and others into the crime of disobedience, have been absolved from excommunication. I know not how it is, but at your court Barabbas is always let go free, and Christ is crucified. Our proscription and the sufferings of the church have now lasted nearly six years. The innocent, poor, and exiled are condemned before you, and for no other cause, I say conscientiously, than because they are Christ’s poor and helpless ones, and would not recede from God’s righteousness: whilst on the other hand the sacrilegious, murderers, and robbers are acquitted, how-

ever impenitent, though I say on Christ's own authority, that St. Peter himself sitting on the tribunal, would have no power to acquit them. For He says, according to St. Luke, 'If thy brother offend, rebuke him; and if he be repentant, forgive him,' etc. These words, 'if he be repentant,' are not superfluous or idle. Christ will not have to give account for those words as idle on the day of judgment. He will rather condemn those who presume, contrary to his commands, to forgive offenders who do not repent, and so to vivify such that cannot live. Surely if what is stolen can be restored, and is not restored, that man's repentance is but feigned. The Holy Spirit will shun falsehood, for He is Truth itself. Let him take the burden upon him who dares to do so; let him absolve robbers, homicides, the sacrilegious, the perjured, the blood-thirsty, without repentance; I for my part will never grant remission to the impenitent who have plundered the church of God. Is it not the spoils of us, or rather of our church, which the king's envoys are lavishing or promising among the cardinals and the courtiers? What sin shall ever be revealed, if that which is committed against God's church is concealed? We can no longer defend the liberty of the church, because the apostolic see has now protracted our exile to the sixth year. O God, look to it and judge our cause! Yet for that church we are prepared to die. If all the cardinals rise up against us, and arm not only the English king, but all the world to our destruction, I will never, with God's blessing, either in

life or in death, withdraw from my fidelity to the church. I commit my cause for the future to God, for whom I am suffering exile and proscription. May He heal my sorrows as He deems best for me. I have no further occasion for troubling the Roman court; I will leave that for those who prevail in their evil deeds, who triumph over righteousness, lead innocence captive, and return victorious to the confusion of the church. Would to God that looking to Rome had not killed so many of my fellow-exiles! Who will in future resist the king, whom the Roman church has inspired by so many triumphs, and armed with a pernicious precedent that will have due effect upon posterity? God bless your holiness, and may you think of me in your prayers to the Lord."

Nor was it in the matter of absolution alone that the court of Rome dissembled. With one letter they imperatively forbade Roger of York, and all the bishops of England, to assist at the coronation of the king's son, during the archbishop of Canterbury's absence. In other letters, they permitted and even enjoined them to perform the ceremony. Becket himself wrote in the former sense, and gave his letters for conveyance to the bishop of Worcester, on whose person they were stopped at Dieppe, as he was embarking for England. But the archbishop also prepared letters of interdict, which he addressed first to the bishop of London, commanding him, within fifteen days after their receipt, "to forbid the celebration of divine service throughout all your diocese, except

the baptism of infants, and the penance of the dying," on "peril of your orders, dignities, and preferments," and of "everlasting damnation." To prevent the fall of this crushing blow, the king once more offered terms of accommodation, promising to make peace without fail. Seeing him thus thoroughly humbled and awed, Becket forbore to stipulate even for a pledge of safety. Their meeting took place on the borders of Maine and Chartraine, near the castle of Freitval. They rode together apart, talking in strict privacy; suddenly the archbishop alighted, and threw himself on his knees. The king raised him up, and held his stirrup while he remounted. The explanation of this curious scene was, that the king had granted everything the archbishop requested, even to the liberty of cursing the bishops who had crowned Prince Henry. Some doubted the sincerity of so abject a submission, but Becket ordered his people instantly to prepare for their return to England. Suspicion was strengthened when John of Salisbury and others, sent to ask from the king the promised restitution of castles, were put off, and at length denied. But the archbishop continued his preparations—not excepting the stowage of some French wine, given him by the king, for consumption in his English houses. He was furnished by the pope with letters of excommunication against both Roger and Foliot,—but desired now their pardon, on condition of recognising the supremacy of the church of Canterbury. At Tours, and again at Chermont, near Blois, Becket had interviews with the king; but the first

was to complain that his agents refused to give up the property they had seized, and each accused the other—while at the second, Henry's offer to put all things once more into the hands of the archbishop, if only he would yield to his pleasure, suggested to Becket the words of the devil, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me!"

CHAPTER XI.

RETURN AND DEATH.

It was on Tuesday, the 1st of December, 1170, that Becket returned to England, after an absence of nearly six years. Some of his biographers remark that Tuesday was his ominous day—the day of his birth and baptism, of his flight from Northampton and from England, and of his departure from the court in Normandy; a coincidence to be strengthened by his death on a Tuesday. Previous to his embarkation, he was warned by Milo, dean of Boulogne, that there were men waiting on the English coast either to murder or make him prisoner. He replied, “It is of no consequence to me; if I am torn limb from limb I will go. It is now seven years since my church has been deprived of a pastor, and it is my request, perhaps my last request, to my friends, that if I cannot return to Canterbury alive they will carry me there dead.” He had brought with him the letters of excommunication, which the three bishops sought to evade by embarking at Dover, just as he was about to cross the channel. But the letters had been sent on by a messenger who delivered them in the port, or on shipboard. This was the second time the arch-

bishop had been indebted to voluntary zeal for the performance of this peculiar service—formerly by Berenger, now by a woman named Idonea, the memory of whose romantic devotion is kept alive by this remarkable letter from the archbishop:—

“ God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty.

“ The pride of Holophernes, which exalted itself against God, when the warriors and the priests failed, was extinguished by the valour of a woman; when apostles fled and denied their God, women attended Him in his sufferings, followed Him after his death, and received the first-fruits of the resurrection. You, my daughter, are animated with their zeal; God grant that you may pass into their society. The Spirit of love hath cast out fear from your heart, and will bring it to pass, that the things which the necessity of the church demands of you, arduous though they be, shall appear not only possible, but easy.

“ Having this hope, therefore, of your zeal in the Lord, I command you, and for the remission of your sins enjoin on you, that you deliver the letters, which I send you from his holiness the pope, to our venerable brother Roger, archbishop of York, in the presence, if possible, of our brethren and fellow-bishops; and if not, in the face of all who happen to be present. Moreover, lest by any collision the original instrument should be suppressed, deliver a transcript of it to be read by the by-standers, and open to them its intention, as the messenger will instruct you.

“My daughter, a great prize is offered for your toil, remission of sins, a fruit that perisheth not,—the crown of glory, which, in spite of all the sins of their past lives, the blessed sinners of Magdala and Egypt have received from Christ their Lord.

“The Lady of Mercies will attend on you, and will entreat her Son, whom she bore for the sins of the world, God and Man, to be the guide, guard, and companion of your steps. He who burst the bonds of death, and curbed the violence of devils, is not unable to restrain the impious hand that will be raised against you.

“Farewell, bride of Christ, and ever think upon his presence with you.”

Milo's warnings were confirmed by the crew of a ship that left Dover immediately after the news of the excommunication had got about. They stated that the king's party along the coast were much excited, but that the people would be very glad to see their archbishop. Both statements proved true. As the vessel, with the silver cross at its prow, neared the port of Sandwich, the people hurried down to the beach, and even waded in the surf, to bear the archbishop to land and receive his blessing. The officers inquired if there were any foreigners in his train, and reproached him with having troubled the country by the excommunication; but when he told them he had the king's license, they offered no molestation. In all the villages on the road to Canterbury, the inhabitants came forth, headed by their priests, ringing the church bells, and spreading

garments in his way. In Canterbury itself there was such a holiday as had never been seen,—rich and poor putting on their best things,—a procession going out to meet him,—thanksgivings in the churches, a banquet in the hall, the cathedral lighted up, and the city resounding with trumpets and anthems. After service, the archbishop preached from the text, “Here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come.”* At night, he retired to the Augustine monastery. But there was some trouble in the town at the news that several of the king’s friends, on their way to the coast, turned off to the west when they heard of the archbishop’s reception. Next morning, there came Randolph de Broc and others, demanding absolution for the bishops, who had not yet left the country. Becket replied, that though the excommunication was not his but the pope’s, he would venture to absolve them, if they would promise to abide the judgment of their brethren on the question they had raised. This London and Salisbury would have done, but York refused, declaring he would empty his coffers in prosecuting an appeal against this insolent Thomas. Thereupon the others set off to the court in Normandy.

After resting a week at Canterbury, the archbishop set out for London, to pay his respects to the young king. Rochester, the only important town in his road, received him with every mark of honour. The metropolis exceeded even Canterbury in the warmth of its welcome. “An immense multitude of all

* Heb. xiii. 14.

classes, men and women, clergy and laity, went out to meet him, and to bless God for allowing him to return amongst them." A procession of monks conducted him to St. Mary's, Southwark. Three thousand clerks and poor scholars stationed themselves on the road side, and sang the *Te Deum Laudamus*, as for a great victory. To the people in the streets he bowed and cast money, in acknowledgment of their acclamations. The canons of St. Mary's stood in their porch, singing, "Blessed is he who cometh." He lodged at night in the palace of Henry of Winchester, at the south foot of London Bridge. But in the morning, there came Joceline de Arundel, the young king's uncle, to order him to return to his diocese—and that although he had sent to his old pupil a present of three very fine Flemish horses. "Is it the young king's intention to forbid me his presence?" he asked. "His commands are as I have said," answered Joceline. But when news reached him that Randolph de Broc, besides refusing to yield his castle of Saltwood, had seized the vessel loaded with his wine, killed some of the crew, and shut up the rest in Pevensey Castle,—Becket sent word of it, by the prior of Dover and the abbot of St. Alban's, to young Henry, who ordered the goods to be restored and the sailors liberated. Randolph himself arrived next day, and attempted to hold to bail the priors and citizens for having made a procession in honour of the king's enemy; but they refused to be bound on his summons. A mad woman startled the people in all public places by calling out to the archbishop,

“Beware of the knife! beware of the knife!” It is not probable that he feared, though he certainly had reason to apprehend, a personal attack—else would he have taken a larger escort than the five lancers whom he hired to accompany him to Canterbury. He seems rather to have become at once careless of his life, and anxious to end it with honour. But he was not, for all that, superior to irritation at the insults and robberies of the De Brocs; who killed his deer, lured his dogs, beat his servants, and finally cut off the tail of one of his pack horses. It was a gleam of winter sunshine, amid this tempest of uncertainties, to receive the submission of Hugh, Earl of Norfolk, one of the excommunicated barons. The archbishop wrote to him and to the bishop of Norwich very graciously, promising to visit them when he had opportunity. But he could hardly have hoped that it would ever come. It was now Christmas,—and when, on that festival, preaching, before high mass, from the favourite but misquoted text, “*In terrâ pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis*,”* he pointed to the tomb of St. Alphege, and said, “You have one martyr among you now, and you may soon have another.” The excitement of the people at these words communicated itself to the preacher. His plaintive strain changed into one of fierce invective. “You would have thought,” says Herbert de Bosham, “that you were looking at the face of the prophetic beast, which was at once that of a man and of a lion.”

* Luke ii. 14. In the English version, “On earth peace, goodwill toward men.”

With the insults of the De Brocs flaming up in his mind, he even condescended to specify, with an emphasis that appeared as little incongruous to his hearers as to himself, the cutting off his horse's tail, and the spoliation of his wine ship. Then he swept on, with a voice of thunder, to the greater offences committed against his see and the rights of holy church. He denounced and forbade communion with the nobles and clerks who had intruded into his benefices,—and did not forget Roger of York and his associates. In conclusion, he cursed and excommunicated whoever should sow hatred and discord between himself and the king. With these words he dashed the candlestick from his pulpit to the pavement. As he passed to the altar, by the tomb of St. Alphage, he repeated to his crossbearer, “One martyr you have already—another, if God will, you may have soon.” Nevertheless, he dined cheerfully in his hall after service; and it was observed that, though it was Friday, he partook of fare appropriate to the festival, not to the fast. On both the following days he celebrated mass. On Sunday night he sent away, with messages to the king of France and the archbishop of Sens, his faithful secretary Herbert, and Alexander his crossbearer, bidding them commend themselves to the king, for they would see him no more. Another clerk he sent to the pope,—and two others with the letters to Norfolk and Norwich. Then he inquired for William of Wrotham, a priest who had met him there, on his last journey from London, and probably warned him of some danger; for he

bade him come to Canterbury, where he should find provision for life. William not having arrived, he drew up a deed, appointing him to the chapelry of Penshurst; and added a sentence of excommunication against any one who should attempt to disturb him therein.

So closed the last Sunday of his life. One of his biographers alludes to some intimation of imminent danger, as having been received that night in a letter from France. However that may be, fatal danger was already on the road. Four armed knights had this same Sunday night left the king, in a frenzy of rage, and were galloping towards the coast. It is doubtful whether there had not been a faint resolution, at a sort of council on the previous Thursday, that the archbishop's life should be taken. The account of the excommunicated bishops, and of the witnesses to Becket's reception, inflamed the whole court to a desperate pitch. When the king asked the bishops what they would have him do, one of them—his name remains in merciful obscurity—replied, "So long as Thomas lives, you will never enjoy one day's tranquillity." Then came one of those fits of demoniac fury which changed the face of the king, and set him rolling on the bed and biting at the coverlet. He cursed the false wretch who ate his bread, but left him exposed to the violence of a priest. Then arose Reginald Fitzarre, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville, and Richard Breton, and went forth on their errand of blood. Entering the archbishop's country by diverse ports, they assembled on

Monday night at Saltwood Castle, took dark counsel there with the excommunicated De Brocs, and next morning rode into the city. They took with them a guard of soldiers, and sent out a herald to warn the city in the king's name against giving succour to the archbishop. Terrible as were these premonitions of their purpose, the archbishop met them proudly, in the midst of his monks, and they left without offering violence. But in the afternoon, at the hour of evening-song, they came back, and followed the archbishop and his attendants along the passages which led from the monastery to the cathedral. One of the monks had the presence of mind to close behind him a door in these passages, which compelled the intruders to go round and knock at the church gate, which the archbishop instantly ordered to be opened. With trembling he was obeyed. What followed is best told by an eye-witness and sufferer,—Edward Grim, who was now the crossbearer, and himself shared the blow which killed his master.

“With drawn swords,” says Grim, “they enter the house of peace and reconciliation, by the very sight and noise of weapons, striking terror into the beholders. Those who were present, having come to evening lauds, but in reality to a spectacle of death, being all affrighted and thrown into confusion, the soldiers furiously shouted, ‘Where is Thomas Becket, traitor to the king and to the kingdom?’ And when no one answered to this, they vociferated again more loudly, ‘Where is the archbishop?’ At this word the archbishop, intrepid, according as it is

written, 'The righteous, bold as a lion, shall be without fear,' comes down from the step (of the altar) to which the monks had carried him for fear of the soldiers, and very audibly answered, 'Here am I, not a traitor to the king, but a priest. What do you want?' And he who had already told them that he feared not added, 'I am ready to suffer in the name of Him who redeemed me with His blood; God forbid that I should flee from your swords, or shrink from justice.' When he had spoken thus he turned aside towards the right hand, under a pillar having on one side an altar of the blessed mother of God, and perpetual virgin Mary, and on the other an altar of the holy confessor Benedict, by whose example and suffrages he was crucified to the world and its lusts, and with as great constancy as if he were not in the flesh. Whatever the butcher could bring he bore and overcame.

"Here the murderers followed him, demanding, 'Absolve the persons you have excommunicated, and restore to their offices those who are suspended.' 'They have given no satisfaction,' said he, 'and therefore I will not absolve them.' 'Then you must die,' said they, 'and get what you deserve.' 'And I am ready,' he replied, 'to die for my Lord, that by my blood the church may obtain liberty and peace; but I forbid you, in the name of Almighty God, to do any harm to any of my people, either clerk or layman.'

"Then they made a rush, laid on him their sacrilegious hands, pulled him violently to drag him out

of the church, that, as they afterwards confessed, they might either kill him on the outside, or carry him away bound. But he holding by the pillar so firmly that they could not easily remove him, he stoutly resisted one of them; and saying, 'Reginald, touch me not, you owe me fealty and subjection; you and your accomplices are acting very foolishly,' pushed away the wretch. But this knight, burning with rage at the terrible repulse, and brandishing his sword over that sacred head, retorted, 'I neither owe you fealty nor subjection, contrary to the fealty due to my lord the king.' The unconquerable martyr therefore, seeing that the hour was come that must end his miserable mortality, and that the crown of immortality prepared and promised by his Lord was now ready to be given, bowed his head in an attitude of prayer, and raising his joined hands, commended his cause and that of the church to God, to Mary, and to Denys, the blessed martyr.

"Scarcely had he finished when the vile knight, afraid that, rescued by the people, he would escape with life, suddenly fell upon him, and on the top of that shaven head which had been dedicated unto God with holy chrism, wounded the lamb that was to be immolated before God, and with the stroke cut through the arm of him who now speaking. For he, when all the monks and clerks fled, constantly kept close to the holy bishop, and held him fast in both arms until he the arm that met the sword. . . . Then came another stroke,

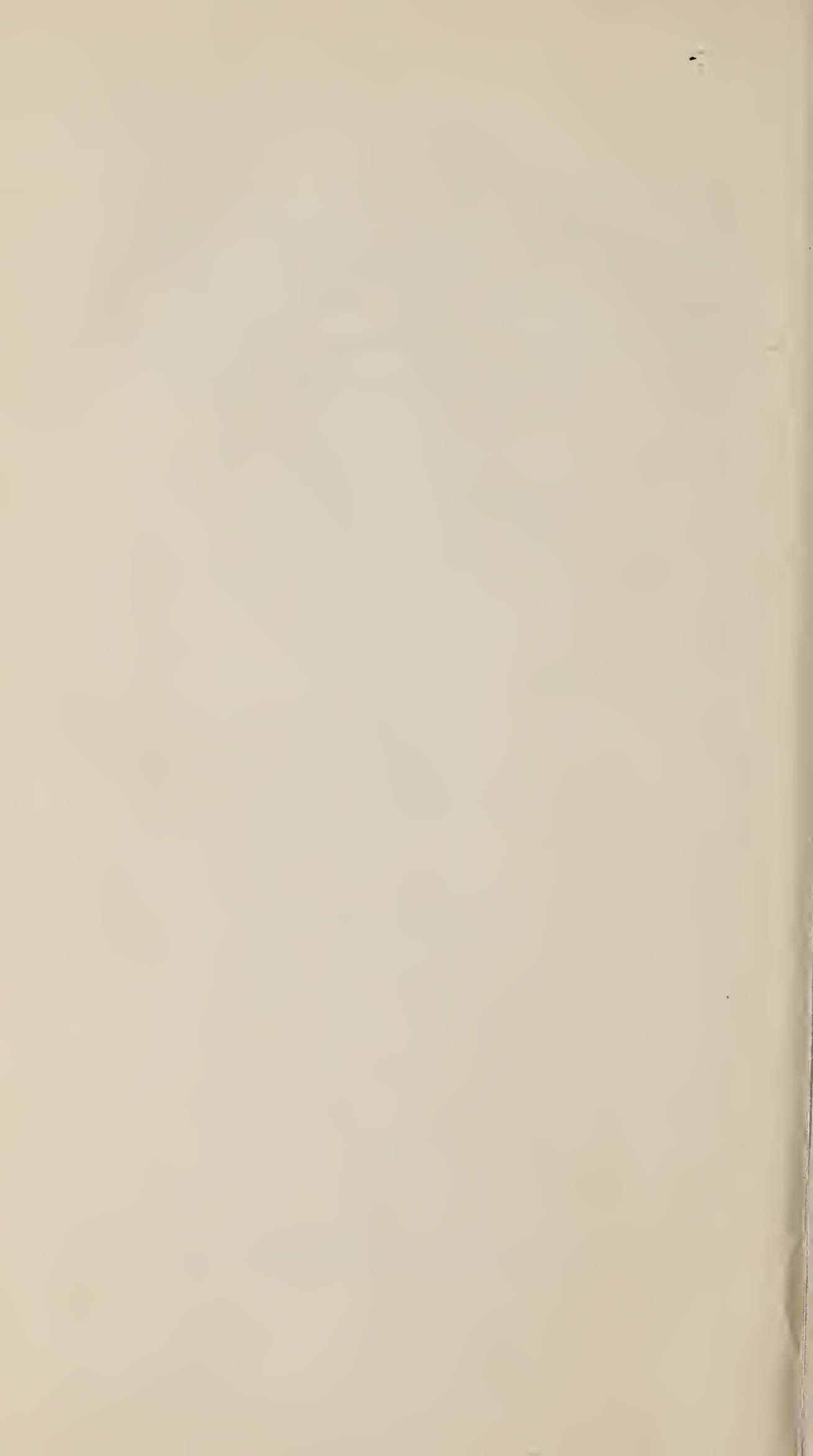
but still he stood unmoved. But under a third the martyr dropped his arms, sank upon his knees, and offering himself a living sacrifice, said in a low voice, 'For the name of Jesus and the care of the church, I am ready to be put to death.' As he was falling forward a third knight came with a heavy stroke. The sword glanced from the stone, and carried away the top of his skull so entirely, that the white brain appeared reddened with gushing blood, colours of the lily and the rose; white of the Virgin and red of mother church—colours that both in life and death tinged the face of the confessor and the martyr.

"A fourth knight had come, but turned away, that others might more freely perpetrate the deed of death. A fifth—not a knight, but a cleric—that clerk who had come with the knights, lest a fifth wound should be wanted for the martyr to be perfect in his imitation of Christ, set his foot upon the neck of the holy priest and precious martyr, and, horrible to relate, scattering the brains over the pavement, shouted to the rest, 'Now let us go, knights; this fellow will not get up again.'"

Their consciences must have belied their mouths, as they rode off hastily through the gathering gloom, while the altar lights fell on that accusing patch of blood. Still louder must their consciences have spoken when they heard how the monks buried, and the people bewailed, the murdered priest. But the voice was to wax still louder. For the penance of Henry, the calamities which befell the execu-

tioners of his wrath, the shrine of St. Thomas, the countless worshippers, and the verdict of posterity, all attest that the dead did rise again, and overcome his mortal enemies. The posthumous history of Thomas Becket is perhaps the grandest portion of his history,—but it is not for us to tell.

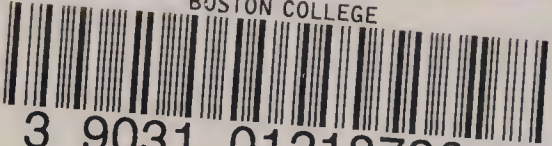
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